LIFE & WORK OF THE RIGHT HON. SIR JOHN THOMPSON

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Her Majesty The Queen.

LIFE AND WORK

OF THE

RT. HON. SIR JOHN THOMPSON

P.C., K.C.M.G., Q.C.

PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA

EARLY LIFE AND STRUGGLES—HIS RAPID RISE TO FAME AND HIGH POSITION—HIS GREAT WORK FOR CANADA—HIS BRILLIANT LEGAL ABILITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS—HIS NOBLE SERVICES TO THE EMPIRE AND LOYALTY TO THE CROWN.

HIS CONSCIENTIOUS DEVOTION TO DUTY AND HIGH RELIGIOUS CHARACTER—HIS DISTINGUISHED PLACE AS A PARLIAMENTARY DEBATER, ORATOR AND STATESMAN—HIS LEADING SPEECHES UPON PUBLIC QUESTIONS—HIS LAST DAYS AND DRAMATIC DEATH.

WITH NUMEROUS ENGRAVINGS

BY

J. CASTELL HOPKINS

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WINDSOR CASTLE.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

A Great Canadian.—

CHAPTER II.

Early Days. Parentage—Birth—Education—An industrious student. A proficient shorthand writer—Studies law and is admitted to the Bar of Nova-Scotia—Gradual progress—An Alderman of Halifax. Connection with various societies—A stormy political period. Youthful skill in debate—Appearance and habits.....00–00

CHAPTER III.

Law and Politics. High legal reputation in the Province—Appointed counsel for the U.S. Government before the Halifax Fisheries Commission—Enters political life in 1877—Becomes a member of the Provincial Government and later on Premier of Nova-Scotia—His establishment of the municipal system—Appointed to the Bench of the Province—His remarkable judicial faculty—Great success as a Judge—Founding of the Law school at Halifax.....00–00

CHAPTER IV.

Enters the Government. Becomes Minister of Justice—Press comments—General congratulations and public appreciation of the appointment—Discussion in the House of Commons and expression of opinion by Mr. Blake and Sir John Macdonald—Speaks at London and other places—His first measure introduced to the House.....00–00

CHAPTER V.

The Riel Question. The difficult position of the Government. Points at issue—French-Canadian indignation—Importance of a right decision—Mr. Landry's motion in the House—Mr. Thompson's great speech—Wins a national reputation in a few hours—Necessity for the execution of Louis Riel—His crimes and their just penalty—The Minister of Justice denounces those in Quebec who would make religion a political question—The question finally settled in the elections which followed.....00–00

CHAPTER VI.

The Fisheries Question. A critical period—The Minister of Justice sent to Washington with Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Charles Tupper.

His able work—A treaty arranged but afterwards thrown out by the U.S. Senate — Speech in the House upon the question—Created a K.C.M.G., by the Queen.....00-00

CHAPTER VII.

The Jesuits' Estates Act. Exceptional difficulty of Sir John Thompson's position—The debate—His great speech upon the Question—Overwhelming support given the Government in the House—Bitter attacks upon Sir John from other quarters — Opposition of Mr. D'Alton McCarthy and others..... 00-00

CHAPTER VIII.

French in the North-West. A race question growing out of the unfortunate Riel campaign—Sir John Thompson's fair attitude in the matter—His splendid speech in the House of Commons—Reply to Mr. McCarthy. The Government amendment carried..... 00-00

CHAPTER IX.

The Elections of 1891. A memorable battle—The Chief's manifesto—Sir John Thompson speaks in Toronto and elsewhere—With Sir Charles Tupper's aid he holds the Maritime Provinces for the Government—A party victory.....00-00

CHAPTER X.

Death of Sir John Macdonald. The end of a great life—Sir John Thompson unselfishly refuses the Premiership—Private letters written by Mr. Abbott and Sir John Thompson at the time of the Chieftain's death—Serves under Mr. Abbott as Leader of the Commons—A difficult session skilfully managed — Speeches at various places—Triumphant bye-elections.....00-00

CHAPTER XI.

The Scandal Campaign. Memories of Mercier—The Caron-Edgar charges—The case against Mr. Haggart—The Cochrane charges—The Rykert affair—Sir John Thompson's attitude in these cases and in the famous McGreevy-Langevin matter—The London election case—His position upheld by the people—Mr. Haggart and the Curran Bridge case.....00-00

CHAPTER XII.

Census and Redistribution. The census of 1891, not very satisfactory—Movements of population—A redistribution of seats necessary—Sir John Thompson's share in the Government proposals and his able leadership of the House upon the measure introduced.....00-00

CHAPTER XIII.

SIR JOHN THOMPSON BECOMES PREMIER. A general recognition of his great ability and merits—The three Conservative Premier's compared—The members of the new Government—Struggles of a Session—Scandals and difficulties—Sir John's high character a great aid to the party and source of confidence to the country—Speeches in the House—A great deliverance at Toronto.....00–00

CHAPTER XIV.

MANITOBA SCHOOL LEGISLATION. The questions involved—Delicate position of the Minister of Justice—Steps taken by the Catholics of Manitoba to recover the right to state-aided schools—Reference to the Supreme Court of Canada—Taken to the Privy Council of the Empire—Certain points considered by the Canadian Privy Council—Final reference to England—Sir John Thompson anxious only to do his duty, legally and impartially.....00–00

CHAPTER XV.

CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES. Sir John Thompson at Washington—Conference with Mr. Blaine—Important results—Fisheries, Reciprocity and Behring Sea questions—Sir John's position upon International issues—His battles for Canadian interests and trade—The Bond-Blaine Treaty—Tariff policy of the Government discussed in important speeches at Belleville and Pictou.....000–000

CHAPTER XVI.

CONNECTION WITH THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH. A cause of severe criticism and unjust aspersion—The true history of Sir John Thompson's change of religion—His sincerity, earnestness and Christian zeal—His noble Christian character—The personal attacks of Rev. Dr. Douglas, and the P.P.A.—Defence by Bishop Cameron and others.....000–000

CHAPTER XVII.

FISCAL MATTERS AND TRADE POLICY. Tariff Policy of the new Government—Sir John Thompson announces in a brilliant speech before the Toronto Board of Trade his intention to "lop the mouldering branches away"—An important utterance in the Auditorium, Toronto, shortly afterwards—A great meeting and reception to the Premier—Eleven Ministers present—Speeches which gave a complete view of the Government's policy 000–000

CHAPTER XVIII.

RELIGION AND POLITICS. The Mercier Regime—The rise and fall of the Equal Rights Movement—Secret Opposition of some Protestants to a Catholic Premier—Sir John Thompson's attitude—Rise of the P.P.A.

and its publicly avowed hostility to Roman Catholicism—An Australian Cardinal on Canadian topics—Moderation the Premier's watchword as it was that of his great predecessor.....000–000

CHAPTER XIX.

THE BEHRING SEA QUESTION. Importance of the Issues involved—A long-standing problem—England willing to stand by Canada at any cost—Lord Salisbury's famous announcement—Reference to Arbitration—Sir John Thompson's appointment as British Arbitrator, a marked compliment to Canada and to the Minister of Justice—His great services to the Dominion at Paris—Settlement of the Question—Return of the Premier, and his opinion of the results—The Queen appoints him a member of the Imperial Privy Council—Honours to Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper and others.....000–000

CHAPTER XX.

SIR JOHN THOMPSON AND MR. MCCARTHY. Characteristics of the two men—Both strong-willed and disinclined to brook opposition—The Empire incident—Mr. McCarthy considers Sir John responsible for his being read out of the party—The Premier's dislike of sectarian issues—His speeches show that he thought them a very great danger to the country—Mr. McCarthy's views—The latter's present position and policy.....000–000

CHAPTER XXI.

SIR JOHN THOMPSON AS AN IMPERIAL STATESMAN. His deep and earnest loyalty—In this respect a fitting successor to Sir John Macdonald—Thoroughly Canadian, but also devoted to British unity—Views upon the general question of closer relations—The address to the Queen re Treaty rights—Independence denounced by Sir John upon several occasions—Favoured Imperial Preferential trade—His broad grasp of affairs fitted him to be the spokesman of Canada upon such topics.....000–000

CHAPTER XXII.

SIR JOHN THOMPSON AS MINISTER OF JUSTICE. His wonderful legal ability and industry—Attitude upon the disallowance of Provincial legislation—The Manitoba Companies' Act vetoed—The Jesuit Estates and Manitoba Schools' case prove his impartiality—Insolvency Legislation—The Banking Act—The Criminal Code.....000–000

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE COPYRIGHT QUESTION. Sir John Thompson fights the battle of Canadian interests—His able and exhaustive state papers upon this subject—Canada first, the Empire second, the United States nowhere.....000–000

CHAPTER XXIV.

A Tour of the Province of Ontario. Sir John Thompson visits many of the leading towns and is every where splendidly received—Speaks at Berlin and Elmira—At Clinton—At Walkerton—At Tara and Southampton—At Lucan—At Durham—At Mt. Forest—At Kenilworth and Clinton—At Mitchell, Owen Sound, Markdale and Goderich—The general policy of the Government clearly and forcibly outlined 000-000

CHAPTER XXV.

The Intercolonial Conference. The central event of Sir John Thompson's Premiership—Much of its success due, however, to the Hon. Mackenzie Bowell's enthusiastic and able work—Sir John's brilliant speech at the not less brilliant opening—Results of the great gathering—A triumph for British unity and Canadian commercial development—Sir John Thompson makes a patriotic speech at a dinner to Sir Thomas McIlwraith—Other speeches upon the subject.....00-00

CHAPTER XXVI.

Later Events in a Great Life. Unveiling of the Hamilton Statue to Sir John Macdonald—Visits to Toronto—Opening of the Exhibition—Eloquent speech dealing with Canada and the duties of a public man—In Muskoka for a holiday—Unveiling of the Statue to Sir John Macdonald in Queen's Park, Toronto—Splendid speech and popular reception.....00-00

CHAPTER XXVII.

Last Days. Warned to retire from office in order to save his life—Leaves for England so as to obtain a rest and to be sworn in as an Imperial Privy Councillor—On the Continent for a short time—Discussions with Lord Ripon and others regarding Canadian Copyright—Does not feel well—His last speech—Leaves London for Windsor Castle—Brilliant ceremonial—Sworn in by the Queen—Dies shortly after surrounded by some of England's foremost men—The most dramatic and perhaps saddest death in modern history—"The paths of glory lead but to the grave."..... 00-00

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The Mourning of an Empire. The Queen's grief—Sympathy showered upon Lady Thompson—Unique honours paid the remains of the dead statesman—A semi-state funeral from Windsor to London—Her Majesty places a wreath upon the coffin—The body lies in state at the Catholic Church in Spanish Place—The Imperial Government summons a warship from Gibraltar to transport the remains to Halifax—An unprecedented honour—The Queen and Miss Thompson—State funeral in Canada—The grief of a nation shown in press, pulpit and personal eulogies 000-000

CHAPTER XXIX.

A Statesman in Private Life. Fond of home and family—A devoted husband and father—Generous and hospitable in social relations—Financial matters—Personal characteristics—At home in Ottawa—At Sans Souci—Aversion to display or ostentation—Incidents and stories—Sir John not devoid of humour—A Judicial incident—A legal story—A stumping anecdote — Studies French in Paris — A reportorial story—Other interesting reminiscences — The Testimonial to Lady Thompson — Generosity of Sir Frank Smith, Senator Ogilvie, Sir Donald Smith and others 000-000

CHAPTER XXX.

Sir John Thompson's Work and Worth as viewed by the Press. London newspapers' comment on his life and character—The American press shows its ignorance of Canadian affairs—The Canadian papers, of every shade of political opinion, display their admiration of the services rendered to the Dominion and the Empire by Sir John, and express their appreciation of the great example which his life affords to those who follow after—His career a lesson to all, in determination, justice, Christian honour, integrity, and industry... 000-000

CHAPTER XXXI.

Resolutions of Regret and Sympathy. Every part of the Dominion expresses sorrow—Resolutions of public bodies almost innumerable—The Montreal Board of Trade—The Toronto Board of Trade—The Hamilton Board of Trade—The Conservatives of Brockville—Brant County Council—Chatham City Council—Toronto City Council—Montreal City Council—The Bar of Montreal—The Sir John A. Macdonald Club of Montreal—Halton Young Conservatives — Toronto Young Conservatives—Albany Club, Toronto—Brantford Council—Young Conservatives of Galt — South Brant Conservatives — The Ottawa St. Patrick's Society—City Council of Kingston—Toronto University Senate—Brockville Council. 000-000

APPENDIX.

Some Important Speeches.



THE RT. HON. SIR JOHN S. D. THOMPSON, P.C., K.C.M.G., Q.C.

Fourth Prime Minister of Canada.

INTRODUCTION.

The career and character of a Canadian statesman who had attained the highest place in his own country, would of itself be a subject of interest and importance. But when to the crown of local success has been added the laurel of Imperial fame, it needs no excuse in order to present to the public an historical record of a life so full of work, of action and of achievement, as that of the late Prime Minister of the Dominion.

That the events which Sir John Thompson influenced or moulded, demand the fullest and freest consideration is sufficiently proved by the striking eulogies which have been pronounced upon his career since its sad and sudden termination. And the extracts which follow form an amply sufficient introduction to a work which we believe will be of interest and value to the public, not only of Canada, but of the whole British Empire.

The Right Hon. Lord Russell, of Killowen, Lord Chief Justice of England, paid the following tribute to the memory of the late Premier on the day after his mournful death :

"I first met Sir John Thompson during the sitting of the Behring Sea commission, and from the first was greatly impressed with his broad good sense and eminently judicial mind. He was rather reticent, but of a genial and kindly nature. I know that the late Lord Hannen shared my views with regard to him. Long before the business of the commission was finished, Lord Hannen expressed the highest opinion of Sir John's ability, and frequently after-

wards spoke of the great value of his presence with the commission."

The Marquis of Lansdowne, K.G., lately Governor-General of Canada, and Viceroy of India, wrote to Sir C. Tupper as follows:

"Allow me to express the deep concern with which I heard of the death of Sir John Thompson. It was impossible to know him without being impressed with his immense ability and statesmanlike power. That he had other qualities which made him a most agreeable and interesting colleague nobody was better aware than yourself. His loss is a very great one to the Dominion and to the Empire."

The Right Hon. Lord Herschell, Lord Chancellor of England, in presiding at a meeting of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council on December 13th, spoke at length of Sir John Thompson's sudden death, and of the painful shock that it had given his many friends in Great Britain and the Colonies. "It is an especially heavy loss," he said, "to the country which he served so faithfully, intelligently and successfully. I desire in behalf of myself and my colleagues to express deep sympathy with the Government and people of Canada. We associate ourselves with them in their sorrow."

The Right Hon. the Earl of Jersey, G.C.M.G., lately British Commissioner at the Intercolonial Conference, said to an interviewer:

"Please say to the people of Canada that I am overwhelmed at the loss of one who, during my short stay in Canada, I learned to like so much. Sir John Thompson did much to draw the people of Canada together, and to draw Canada towards this portion of the Empire. The principles which he advocated will not die with him. Every true member of the British Empire deeply laments the loss of so great a man."

Sir Richard Webster, G.C.M.G., Q.C., M.P., Attorney-General in Lord Salisbury's late Government, said in an interview:

"I have long regarded him as a most remarkable man. In the Behring Sea arbitration in Paris, last year, he discharged his functions in a dignified and judicial manner, giving a striking example of firmness and impartiality throughout the proceedings. Everybody who had a part in the arbitration was convinced of his high ability and sound judgment. He had a most upright and exemplary character. Both Canada and Great Britain have lost a most capable administrator, on whom they might have relied for many years to meet every emergency with coolness and sagacity.

The Hon. Theodore Davie, Premier of British Columbia, in moving the adjournment of the House on December 12th, declared that:

"His unswerving integrity gained him the esteem and love of political friends and foes alike; and his opponents, even during the rancour and bitterness which sometimes party feeling calls forth, had nothing but good to say of the Liberal-Conservative chieftain. Canada mourns his demise to-day, and British Columbia has lost one of her best and truest friends."

The Hon. L. O. Taillon, Premier of Quebec, in moving the adjournment of the Legislature on the same day, said:

"Sir John Thompson was not only a distinguished Jurist, he was gifted with universal talent. He understood political requirements admirably. It is, therefore, not surprising that he should have been the object of such admiration on the part of Her Majesty. I believe I echo the sentiments of all in saying that this is an occasion of national mourning, and that we all feel the greatest sympathy for the bereaved family. No doubt Canada has men who will

be able to replace the departed leader. But he had great plans for the future of the country, and no doubt with his admirable talent he would have carried them for the general good."

The Hon. F. G. Marchand, Leader of the Quebec Opposition, joined in a generous tribute by saying:

"Sir John Thompson was really an illustrious man. His career, although short, had been remarkably well filled. On the Bench, in the political arena, or in the diplomatic missions where he appeared, he won the admiration of all competent men by his erudition, his talent, his judgment. Canada has lost one of its most illustrious children."

The Hon. Wilfrid Laurier, Q.C., M.P., speaking at Montreal on the night of the Premier's death, paid him a tribute which was exceedingly graceful and valuable as coming from the leader of the Liberal party:

"Sir John Thompson was one of the ablest of Canada's sons, a man of profound conviction, of great valor and of many brilliant parts. Eminently patriotic, his mind equalled his heart, and his mind was broad. Born a Protestant, he did not fear, when his conscience showed him his duty, to become a Catholic. He cared nothing for the approval of the populace; he felt only the satisfaction of duty accomplished. Could I do otherwise but admire such a man, the finest ornament of Canada, who was above all human considerations. As it was in regard to his faith, so it was in his social and political creed, he felt convinced that he was acting right, and he acted according to the dictates of his conscience."

Mr. D'Alton McCarthy, Q.C., M.P., as a leader of the Canadian Bar, made an equally graceful speech before the Exchequer Court at Ottawa, on December 14th. In the course of his remarks he said:

"I had not, perhaps, as your Lordship had, the oppor-



THE EARL OF ROSEBERY, K. G.,

Prime Minister of Great Britain.

tunity of an intimate acquaintance with the great man who has passed away. I can only speak from the knowledge I had of him from public life as a statesman of the very highest order, I think unexcelled in that capacity by any man whom I have had knowledge of in my public experience. I can say also that as a lawyer—I speak not merely of technical knowledge, but of a lawyer with breadth of view — he stood amidst all the members of the Bar of the Dominion of Canada unsurpassed, and held the highest rank."

Archbishop O'Brien of Halifax, writing with heartfelt sorrow of the death of one whom he knew so well, said:

"We see him yesterday the foremost and most important figure in Great Britain's Colonial Empire, rich in gifts of mind and soul, with ripened but not decaying powers, called by his gracious Sovereign to be one of her Privy Councillors; and were predicting for him as were many millions scattered throughout the empire, still further successes. To-day we mourn the strong man laid low, the eloquent tongue stilled, the energizing and uplifting force of his sterling character at rest."

Archbishop Duhamel of Ottawa, on December 21st, the occasion being a magnificent special service, spoke as follows:

"Canada has lost one of her best sons, and the Empire a son of the utmost ability. No one endowed with human sentiments could view with other than admiration and pride the development of the intellectual and moral qualities of the late Premier, from stage to stage, until in the golden meridian of life he was taken away. In his rapid advancement no principle had been marred, no tarnish incurred. We might rejoice to have an ideal so worthy for all young men. His self-restraint, his kindness, his charity, endeared him to all. These emanated from a Christian spirit."

Archbishop Walsh of Toronto, speaking in St. Michael's

Cathedral on December 16th, paid the deceased Premier a most eloquent tribute:

"Sir John Thompson was a true man, a good and great man. By sheer force of character, by matchless ability and by the purity and nobility of his life, he worked his way up step by step from a humble position in society until, when he had reached the meridian of his life, he occupied the proud position of Premier of this great Dominion. Other men attain to political power by selfish cunning, by base intrigue, by wicked appeals to religious prejudices and the blind passions of fanaticism. Sir John Thompson scorned such base and ignoble methods. The country raised him to his proud position because it recognized in him a true and noble man, a sterling patriot and a wise and able statesman; and it was not mistaken in its choice. With tireless devotion, intelligent zeal and consummate ability he labored in its cause, and by the great and important services he rendered it more than amply repaid the confidence reposed in him."

The Hon. Mackenzie Bowell, Senator, and Minister of Trade and Commerce, who was destined to succeed him as leader and Prime Minister, said when the sad news arrived at Ottawa:

"Our late Premier was an ardent and devoted lover of his country. He was possessed with the strongest possible attachment to the crown, believing that the destiny of Canada and its future greatness depended on the closest possible relations with the motherland. Departmentally, he was one of the most industrious and hard working men who ever occupied a seat in the Council chamber. He never wearied in the discharge of his duty, or shirked any question with which he was called upon to deal."

The Hon. J. J. Curran, Q.C., M.P., a colleague and personal friend of the late leader, spoke of him on Dec. 15th,

at Montreal, in a spirit of deserved eulogy :—" It afforded him great satisfaction to observe that English and French alike united in honoring those glorious characteristics which had gone towards making a statesman whose name would always live. Sir John was a good man. That, even his foes, who pursued him so unrelentingly in life, could not deny. His was indeed no common personality."

The Hon. George E. Foster, D.C.L., M.P., speaking at Montreal, on Dec. 23rd, said of his late chief :

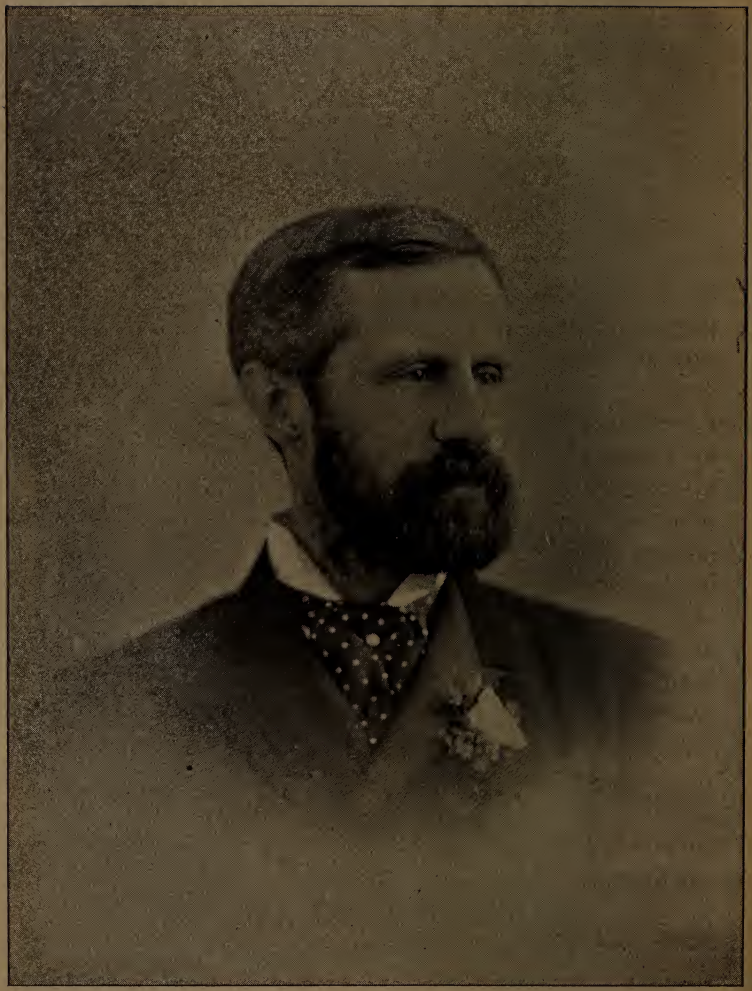
" To-day the minute guns are firing, not only as a signal that Canada has lost a son and a statesman, but that the Empire has lost a loved, an admired, a respected and a devoted son. But out of this calamity, and the grief which has come upon the country, will be forged the bonds which will bind more closely together every part of the Empire, whilst the worst of the feeling of bigotry on account of sect, creed or race will be forever buried."

Many similar tributes were paid to the memory of Sir John Thompson by men equally distinguished. His late colleagues in the Cabinet, in Parliament, and upon the Bench, his opponents in political life, the leaders in England and Australia, and a few in the United States, combined to render full justice to a great career. The only exception was found in the almost complete silence of the American press. The remarks that have been quoted however are not only of personal interest to Canadians, but must also be of historic value. And in that sense no better conclusion could be given to this introduction, than by quoting a portion of the eloquent words uttered by His Excellency, the Earl of Aberdeen, Governor-General of Canada, at Montreal on Dec. 23rd :

" Of the late Sir John Thompson I would like to say that any person who has been called upon during a considerable period of years to occupy positions in public

life, and to meet public men in different parts of the world, will assuredly come into contact with men possessed of high gifts and striking qualities. Yet I question whether such a person could have come in contact with many in whom were more eminently combined the qualities which go to make up the able administrator, the Christian statesman, the true friend. His was the modesty of greatness. While ever ready to take his position with perfect dignity and composure on all state occasions, he never posed for effect, and he was so unselfish that he could even afford to think of others. . . . And so Sir John Thompson has gone from us, but he has left for all of us an inspiring memory and a noble example."

THE PUBLISHERS.



His Excellency the Earl of Aberdeen, P.C.,

Governor-General of Canada.

CHAPTER I.

A Great Canadian.

The Right Honourable Sir John S. D. Thompson possessed one of those strong minds which, in different ages of the world's history, have occasionally swayed the destinies of nations and controlled the people, by pure force of intellect. He was undoubtedly a great man. Tried by ordinary standards, it is perhaps difficult to comprehend his marvellous success in public life. He had no adventitious surroundings of family or wealth. He did not possess a commanding personal appearance and had none of that magnetism of manner, that charm and fascination of speech and gesture, which enabled Sir John A. Macdonald, Lord Palmerston or James G. Blaine to lead men whither they would. Yet, by the power of ability, concentration of purpose, and force of character, he rose with unique rapidity to the highest place in his province, in his party and in his country.

The last nine years of his life were filled with triumphs which came not as the reward of popularity, nor upon waves of national passion, but as the results of a great mind working with patience and patriotic zeal; with clear insight and acute intelligence, upon the different problems which were presented. Triumphs over personal prejudice, born of that self-repression which made a strong man shrink from the arts of the ordinary politician and take refuge in a coldness of manner which concealed his

really warm heart and many generous and sympathetic qualities. Triumphs over that deplorable sectarian sentiment which for a long time refused to admit the greatness of the statesman and the goodness of the man who, in early life, had obeyed his conscience and conviction by a change of religion. Triumphs of oratory at the Bar and in Parliament, upon the Bench and before the people. Triumphs of statesmanship, in the treatment of race and creed questions which, under the manipulation of demagogues, threatened the disintegration of the Dominion; and in the control of Parliamentary matters which more than once endangered the unity and strength of the party. Triumphs of diplomacy, which forced Mr. Blaine, with all his acuteness and ability, into the confession of a desire to obtain commercial control of Canada and a refusal to grant reciprocity on any other terms: and which compelled the settlement upon satisfactory lines of the long-standing Behring Sea troubles. Triumphs as an Imperial statesman which brought about the success of the Intercolonial Conference, created steam communication with Australia, paved the way to closer British unity, and led to the heaping of honours upon the head of Canada through its Premier and representative.

It was a combination of qualities which made Sir John Thompson so great in character, so successful in his career. He was undoubtedly self-confident as well as self-sustained. He was conscious of his own strength and did not feel the necessity of intimidating others, or of asserting himself. And, as Archbishop O'Brien said shortly after the Premier's death, he had the quiet repose of strong minds, the dignified reticence of genius. In his profession: upon the Bench: in public life: in the Department of Justice: his mastery of details was marvellous, and contributed greatly to his success. No case for trial in his earlier career found him unprepared, and no argument

came to him as a bewildering surprise. Lucidity of thought and language characterized him as a lawyer, marked his decisions as a Judge, and his State papers as a Minister. This faculty of clothing the most difficult and involved transactions or propositions in clear and concise language he possessed in an extraordinary degree. Judge Townshend, of Nova Scotia, once declared that, "in shaping, modifying and adapting resolutions and statutes to meet the views of public bodies of which he was a member, I think he was unequalled."

Like most really great men, Sir John possessed a wonderful capacity for work. He never seemed to be in a hurry, and yet succeeded in constantly despatching an enormous amount of business, quickly and efficiently. For some time before the death of Sir John Macdonald, it is an open secret that the Chieftain leaned greatly upon his Minister of Justice, who, during that period, as well as later under the leadership of Sir John Abbott, bore the burden of work in the House of Commons, besides the many and heavy labours connected with his own Department. Since then, also, he has at times assumed diplomatic duties and taken a position and share in the settlement of questions, such as the Behring Sea and Copyright problems, which must have demanded much time and study. And in addition, there have been the continual and normal requirements of deputations, speeches and journeys. Perhaps it would be an elaborate state paper to-day upon the London election case, a speech in the House to-morrow upon the Tarte charges, an address the next day upon the unveiling of a monument to the Springfield, N. S., miners. And Sir John Thompson never did anything by halves. Whatever he undertook was done as well as ability and close observation and application could make possible.

In reading Sir John Thompson's papers and speeches

upon questions like those of Riel's execution, the disallowance of the Jesuits' Estates Act, the Copyright Law, or the Manitoba Schools, one is struck by the completeness and thoroughness of his argument, the keenness and analytical quality of his mind, and the industry and skill displayed in obtaining and marshalling the facts of the case. In dealing with constitutional or international questions, he seemed to be entirely at home. Early training had no doubt made him familiar with the Fisheries question as it affected the Maritime Provinces, and his work in connection with the Halifax Commission gave him a still wider insight into both sides of the dispute. His later experience as a Nova Scotian Judge and Premier increased this knowledge, while his position as Minister of Justice finally brought him into touch with all the legal complications which followed the abrogation of the Fisheries' Clause of the Washington Treaty and the unjust seizure of Canadian vessels in the Behring Sea. The British North America Act was thoroughly familiar to him in all its intricacies, and every shade of public opinion in Canada recognized frankly his high judicial insight and knowledge when it was crowned by selection as one of England's arbitrators in that brilliant gathering of statesmen and jurists at Paris.

A marked feature of the late Premier's character was his entire unselfishness. Devotion to duty was his watchword, disregard of personal considerations and comfort his principle of action. Without any particular liking for politics as such, he left the Bench of Nova Scotia, with its life of comparative ease and affluence and the prospect of undoubted and high promotion, for the stormy career of statesmanship. No doubt he had that ambition for fame which all great men have and which the next few years so fully realized. Perhaps, also, he felt that it was possible



Hon. Sir Charles Tupper, Bart., G.C., M.G., C.B.,

High Commissioner for Canada in England.

for him to render greater service to the country which he loved so well. Judging indeed by his subsequent career, there can be little doubt that Sir John Thompson did deliberately surrender the ermine of ease, as he at a later period refused to take the Chief Justiceship of Canada, in order to devote himself to promoting the welfare of the Dominion.

This quality of unselfish loyalty was well exhibited in those dark days which followed the death of Sir John A. Macdonald. It was a time of political stir and stress; a moment when the Conservative party was bewildered by the greatness of its loss; a period when very little causes might have produced striking and startling results. A man actuated by ambition only would have thought and said in Sir John Thompson's position that he had earned the Premiership, and would have expected it as a right. But Sir John was a true statesman, and his appreciation of the situation made him see that the patriotic course was to step aside for the moment and to continue doing his duty in a high, though still subordinate, sphere. No doubt, too, he felt the consciousness of personal power, and realized that his time could not be far distant. But it must also be remembered that at the moment in question no one knew the full strength of the sectarian feeling in Ontario. It might have prevented Sir John Thompson from ever obtaining the Premiership, as the strength of a similar sentiment in Quebec in earlier days kept George Brown permanently out of power, and during many years in the recent history of Ontario, kept Mr. Meredith in Opposition.

In still another way was his self-sacrifice shown. No one doubts that Sir John could have made large sums of money at his profession, and maintained himself and his family in affluence. So also, had he remained a judge, or

at any later period accepted a judgeship once more, there is every probability that his life would have been indefinitely prolonged, and his promotion rapid; while his eventual elevation to the lofty and remunerative post of a member of the Judicial Committee of the Imperial Privy Council would have been almost a certainty. But he preferred the path of public life and duty to the ease and dignity of the Bench, and his sudden death left a family unprovided for, which, but for unstinted devotion to his national work, would have had ample fortune and an assured future.

His was a peculiar style of oratory—typical of the man and his work. He was unable, and in any case would have been unwilling, to move the masses by appeals to prejudice and passion. But if eloquence finds its perfect expression in convincing minds and swaying intellects, then Sir John Thompson was emphatically a great orator. His memorable speech upon the Riel question placed the new Minister of Justice at one bound in the front rank of Parliamentary debaters, and there he remained until his death. Indeed the full supremacy of his master-mind could hardly be appreciated save by those who heard and felt its operation in the debates of Parliament. Sir John Macdonald held sway in that Chamber for many years by the force of matchless political skill and dexterity, and in the latter period of his life was aided by a ripe and respected experience; a deep personal affection on the part of members; a devoted and united following. But Sir John Thompson stepped up at once to the place held by Sir Charles Tupper and Mr. Blake, and upon their retirement from the scene his supremacy as a debater was practically unchallenged. In command of language he excelled Mr. Blake, who is known to have put much labor into the wording of his speeches; in beauty of expression he some-

what resembled Lord Rosebery; in clearness and incisiveness of style he might have been compared to Mr. Chamberlain. His rank amongst the trained debaters of the Imperial Parliament would have been high; his place in the Canadian House of Commons was the highest.

In the annals of the British Empire he will hold a permanent and lofty place. Under his leadership, though fostered and guided by the patriotic hand of the Hon. Mackenzie Bowell, the movement for closer British relationship found expression in the Ottawa Conference by means of which, tariffs, cables and steamship lines will be freely utilized in drawing the distant parts of our vast Imperial realm into commercial, political and personal union. As the *London Daily News* so well said, that step "established a precedent and suggested the possibility of an imperial federation. The calling of it belonged almost to the dreamland of statesmanship" But the result belongs also to the record of practical work and progress which Sir John perhaps appreciated more than sentimental considerations. The latter he by no means deprecated, however, and his mournful death, almost at the feet of the Sovereign he had served so well, illustrates, as did his life and policy, the famous utterance in a speech at Belleville: "He who serves Canada, serves the Empire, and he who serves the Empire serves Canada as well."

But while his statesmanship exceeded the bounds of the Dominion and stamped itself upon Imperial history; while his heart went out to the Mother-land and his policy strove to bind its children in close union and brotherly intercourse; yet the life work of Sir John Thompson was essentially Canadian. He was emphatically a son of the soil. Born and educated in Canada, his early political battles and later political successes were all fought and obtained within the Dominion. Imperial honours were

showered upon him, and more of them might have come in the future, but they were bestowed for services which in benefiting Canada, benefitted the Empire as well. He was filled with a passionate patriotism which was neither understood nor properly appreciated by the people during his life-time, being as it was to a great extent concealed from view by his calm and cold exterior and by the even flow of his logical and unsympathetic oratory. But it was shown in his policy, and occasionally surprised the public in some unusually eloquent and striking phrase; while his death exhibits the man as he really was—unwilling to give up his post even under the physicians' warning of a fatal termination, because it might lead to party disorganization and the consequent defeat of the principles he held so dear, and of the policy he considered so necessary to the progress and welfare of the Dominion.

No one but a true Canadian, devoted to his country and his cause, could have led the Conservatives through the troubles following the fatal 6th of June, 1891. But Sir John inspired the rank and file of the party with thorough confidence in his ability, and impressed even his most bitter opponents with respect for his honesty and honour. The result was that his moderation, his intellectual strength, his justice, and sincere conscientiousness had become qualities to conjure with, and had lent a peculiar power to his leadership which it is safe to say would have remained unshaken by all the bubbles and foam of sectarian advocacy.

It is difficult to be critical concerning such a life and character as that of Sir John Thompson. Apart from the sympathy which the Angel of Death creates for all men and particularly when it comes amid such surroundings and with such dramatic and painful suddenness, it is not easy to find faults in either his public or private career.



The Rt. Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald, P.C., G.C.B., Q.C., M.P.,

First Prime Minister of the Dominion of Canada.

Men differed from him in politics, but all united in praise of his life, his motives his character, his attainments. When death came, the Opposition press was as eulogistic as were the Government organs. Men differed from him in religion, but his life was so pure, his change of faith has been proved to have been so conscientious and at the time so injurious to his material interests, that all criticism has been hushed, and the denunciations of Dr. Douglas, sincere as that eloquent divine no doubt was, are buried with him. His faults were undoubtedly few, his virtues many. He lived indeed as though he fully appreciated the fact that

> "Our life of mortal breath
> Is but a suburb of the life Elysian,
> Whose portal we call death."

It is not fulsome flattery of a man, who was good as well as great, to say that his whole career and character constitute a noble example for young Canadians. There was never any doubt that Sir John Thompson would do right in any public emergency, in accordance with his convictions, and up to the extreme limit of his power. His inflexible purpose compelled respect from the leaders of his party, and combined with his high character and great ability, caused his Cabinet, as well as his followers in the House, and in the country, to give an extraordinary degree of consideration to his wishes. A well-regulated ambition coupled with concentration of aim and a wide degree of culture, brought him the highest place in a field which his patriotism had made as wide as the Empire. These qualities render the career of Sir John Thompson memorable, and important to all Canadians. They carried him from the reporter's table to the foot of the Throne; they made the young lawyer of other days Minister of Justice for this wide Dominion and a British representative upon more

than one important occasion; they made the once youthful politician and debater a great Prime-Minister and powerful speaker. They will carry his name still further down the corridors of time, as

> "Were a star quenched on high,
> For ages would its light,
> Still travelling downwards from the sky,
> Shine on our mortal sight.
> So, when a great man dies
> For years beyond our ken,
> The light he leaves behind him lies
> Upon the paths of men."

CHAPTER II.

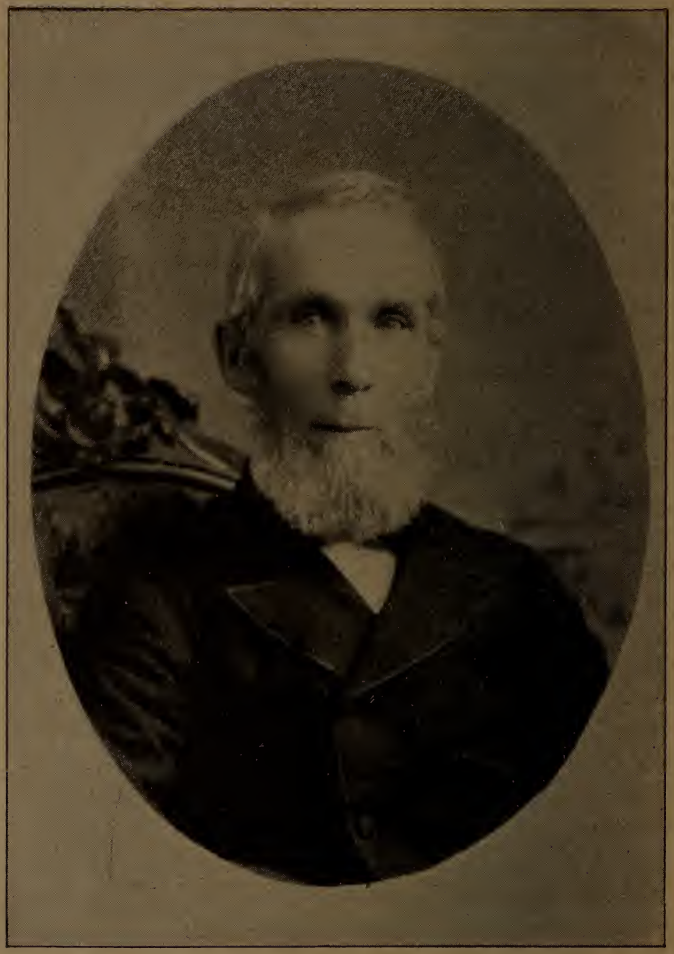
Early Days.

The Province of Nova Scotia has become famous for the men it produces. The broad Dominion of Canada from end to end has felt the impress of their virile force and unusual ability. The name of Sir Charles Tupper is stamped in vivid letters upon the pages of provincial, national and imperial history. The eloquence of Joseph Howe still thunders down through the years which have passed since his wonderful voice was hushed in death. The ability, energy and skill of Sir William Dawson have made McGill University one of the great educational centres of the world, and left his name a lofty one in the difficult realms of science. The great work of Principal Grant has built up Queen's University, Kingston, and his fame as an earnest and eloquent exponent of Imperial unity has not been confined to the shores of Canada. The financial ability of Hon. George E. Foster has been a tower of strength to three Canadian administrations; and the rapid rise of Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper in reputation and position, presage a place in history hardly second to that held by his distinguished father.

But history will probably say that the career of Sir John Thompson was more remarkable than that of any other native of Nova Scotia. His rapid rise, his lofty position, his great honours, his dramatic death, all combined to render the life of the fourth Premier of Canada the most eventful and remarkable in the national annals.

There was, however, nothing in his surroundings to indicate this future when John Sparrow David Thompson was born at Halifax on November 10th, 1844. His mother, a thoroughly good woman, was a native of Scotland, her maiden name being Charlotte Pottinger. His father was a man of some culture and position, though not possessed of private means. He was a native of Waterford, Ireland, and had emigrated, when quite young, to the Province of Nova Scotia, then an isolated, out of the world sort of place, possessed of charms and resources which seemed to be buried in almost complete obscurity. For some years, Mr. John Sparrow Thompson was Queen's Printer, and subsequently for a prolonged period, held the restricted but fairly comfortable post of Superintendent of the Nova Scotian Money Order system.

He seems, however, to have participated in other pursuits as well, and was a frequent contributor to the columns of the *Nova Scotian*, at a time when Joseph Howe as its proprietor was occupied in moulding public opinion with pen and voice and influence. Naturally, he fought with his chief during the struggle for responsible government in the Province, and naturally also, be taught his then youthful son an affectionate regard for the great tribune which had its effect in later days. Mr. Thompson, who died in 1867, seems on the whole to have enjoyed in his day a high reputation as a graceful and well-informed writer, and an accomplished gentleman. The circumstances surrounding his son's boyhood therefore were not at all unfavorable to the youthful development of any remarkable qualities which he might possess. But, as in so many other cases, the child hardly seems to have been the father of the man. He attended the common schools of his native city, and afterwards took a course at the Free Church Academy in Halifax, besides receiving most care-



HON. ALEX. MACKENZIE, M.P.,

Second Prime Minister of Canada.

ful home training and advice, in all his studies and pursuits.

At the early age of fifteen he commenced the study of law as an articled clerk in the office of Mr. Henry Prior, afterwards stipendiary magistrate of Halifax, and was called to the Bar of the Province in 1865, when barely twenty-one. He is described in his student days as having been a slight and rather delicate youth, with a shy and timid manner, and as utterly devoid of anything like conceit or self-assertion. And the daily work of the junior articled student was not then made as pleasant or useful as it is at the present time. It was indeed of the dullest and apparently most useless character, including such labor as the copying of voluminous writs and pleadings, now long done away with, and the general performance of a class of work which is nowadays handed over to the office typewriter. Some one has said in this connection that it was a formidable undertaking even to peruse an ordinary set of the pleadings of thirty years ago; it was a still more difficult task to write out the complete copy of such a set; but the superlative was reached by the bewildered student in the attempt to comprehend the precise meanings of the super-subtle technicalities thus expanded upon so many pages of foolscap. Browning may indeed be termed the embodiment of lucidity in comparison with the intricate legal phraseology of some of the documents of a generation or two since.

But "Johnnie" Thompson, as he was called, not only found time to do his office work and to be an industrious student of the principles of law, but also to master the difficult art of stenography. Then as in the future, what he found to do, he did thoroughly. And when the early years of hard and constant struggle at the bar commenced, the young lawyer was only too glad to eke out his income by

the use of an accomplishment not very common at the time. As a matter of fact also, there is as much difference between a first-class stenographer, such as he was, and one who can only take down words and then give a literal translation of them, as there is between the writer and the pen he drives over the paper. The one will summarize in a short time a ten-column speech so that it will not exceed a column in space and yet include every salient point, grammatically worded, and perhaps embellished in a way the speaker himself was incapable of doing. The other will take down his letters from dictation, and give an exact copy, as may perhaps be his duty, without the exercise of thought or of any special ability.

This was not the way with young Thompson. He practised law and, at the same time, reported the debates of the Legislative Assembly. In 1867, the Official Reporter of the House was Mr. John George Bourinot, now the learned and distinguished Clerk of the Dominion House of Commons. His volumes for that year make acknowledgment to John S. D. Thompson for assistance given, and in the succeeding year they bear the signature of Mr. Thompson as Reporter-in-chief. During the four following sessions he continued to report the debates with great advantage to himself in the gaining of a thorough and ready knowledge of the procedure of Parliament. It must also have given him a very complete acquaintance with the politics and political leaders of his province, and been of great assistance when he later on came to enter the House of Assembly. Meanwhile the reputation of the young lawyer was growing. When he had been at the Bar but little more than two years he had won the respect and confidence of the Bench and of his professional brethren. Simplicity, sincerity and fairness seem to have been the predominant qualities of the lawyer

as they were afterwards of the judge and the statesman. His first partner was Mr. Joseph Coombs, his second, after a few years of indifferent progress, from a pecuniary standpoint, was Mr. Wallace Graham. The firm thus finally formed was a success, and Mr. Thompson soon rose in his profession until he attained the foremost place before the Provincial Bar.

During these years he worked exceedingly hard. Matters were complicated by his father's health failing, and for some years the son performed much of the work pertaining to his parent's Government position by sitting up and labouring far into the night. It is a melancholy fact stated by one of his friends in those seemingly distant days, that his ambition then was to make sufficient money to keep his own family from ever being in the difficulties he himself had experienced. As a lawyer during this period he contributed to the true dignity of a great profession, scorned pettifogging tricks, and was ever on the side of peace and settlement where such results were at all possible. His powers of concentration were very great, and of course aided him not a little in getting through multifarious duties and in winning legal successes.

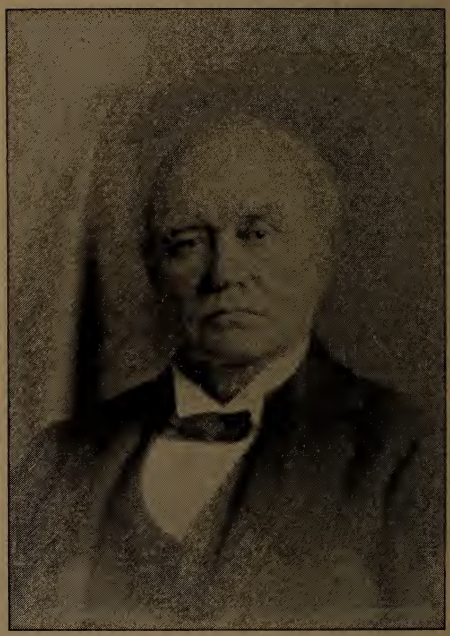
In 1870, at the age of twenty-six, John Thompson was married to Miss Annie Affleck, daughter of Captain Affleck, of Halifax. To her, the partner of his early struggles and his later greatness, he was ever the most devoted of husbands, as he has been to his children a most thoughtful and tender parent. A year later he became a convert to the Roman Catholic Church. This event, which was destined to colour his whole career will require to be

CHAPTER III.

Law and Politics.

The time had now come for Mr. John S. D. Thompson to rise out of the Provincial sphere of legal practice and to take a place amongst the more or less leading lawyers of the Dominion. He had, it is true, already made himself felt before the Bench of Nova-Scotia, and had been connected with a number of important cases. He had thoroughly familiarised himself with the law and practice of his own Province, but as yet the sphere had been too limited for fame and not sufficiently remunerative for wealth. But in 1877 came the chance.

In the early part of that year the Halifax Fisheries' Commission met. It was the outcome of the Washington Treaty of 1871, by the terms of which the Americans had been given the right to fish for twelve years within the limits of Canadian waters in return for a similar right on the part of British subjects within the jurisdiction of the United States. As this latter privilege was almost valueless it was agreed that an International Commission should meet at some date to be thereafter arranged and settle the amount of the compensation which was to be paid Great Britain on behalf of Canada. From various causes nothing definite was done during the following half-dozen years. It was not the fault of the Canadian Government. On the 8th of February, 1877, Mr. Mackenzie's administration announced through the Speech from the Throne that in spite of every effort no advance had been made in obtaining a



SIR JOHN CALDWELL ABBOTT, K.C., M.G., Q.C., D.C.L.

Third Premier of Canada.

settlement from the United States as pledged under the terms of the Treaty. Sir John Macdonald in speaking to the Address admitted that the fault did not lie with Canada, and expressed the earnest hope that the incoming American Government would "remove the stigma that had been cast upon the good faith of the American people," by the previous and positive refusal to carry out this provision of the Treaty of Washington.

The expectations based upon the coming into office of President Hayes were promptly realized, and on June 15th the Commission met at Halifax. The central figure in the gathering was M. Maurice Delfosse, Belgian Minister at Washington, who was named by the Austrian Minister in London, and was expected to hold the scales with absolute justice between the British Commissioner, Sir Alex. T. Galt, K.C.M.G., and the American Commissioner, Hon. Ensign H. Kellogg. M. Delfosse was elected President, and performed his duties with dignity and fairness. Hardly less important personages were the two Agents, the British being Mr. (now Sir) Francis Clare Ford; the American, the Hon. Dwight Foster. There was a brilliant array of Counsel, the British side being especially strong in this respect. It included such men as Joseph Doutre, Q.C., of Montreal; S. R. Thomson, Q.C., of St. John, N.B.; Hon. W. V. Whiteway, Q.C., of Newfoundland; Hon. L. H. Davies, of Charlottetown; and R. L. Wheatherbe, Q.C., of Halifax. Upon the American side were Richard H. Dana, Jr., and Francis H. Trescott. But fortunately for the case he had to present, Mr. Dana recognized the necessity of calling in to his assistance some Nova-Scotian lawyer who was known to be thoroughly posted in Maritime Provincial matters and versed in the law of maritime nations. He selected Mr. J. S. D. Thompson and thus gave him the one opportunity he required. It was with him, as it is in such cases with all lawyers, a purely business transaction.

Two sides in an important international case had to be presented before certain judges, and he undertook to aid in the preparation of the American brief. On the 30th of July and after the Commission had been sitting for three days, he was formally introduced in the following words, extracted from the official minutes:

"Mr. Dwight Foster then requested permission to introduce Mr. J. S. D. Thompson, of Halifax, and Mr. Alfred Foster, of Boston, who would attend the Commission to perform such duties on behalf of the United States as might be assigned to them."

CHAPTER IV.

Enters the Government.

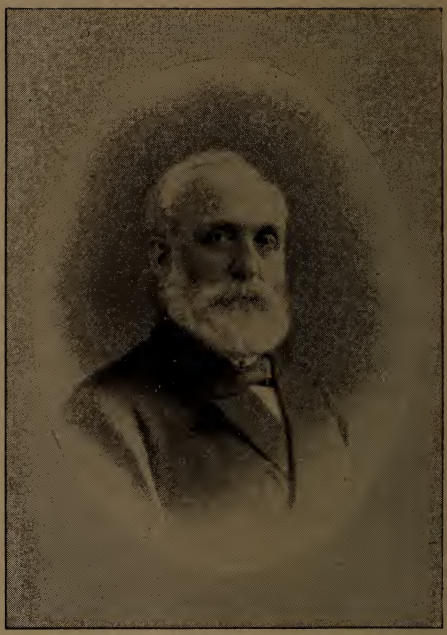
By the autumn of 1885 some important changes in the composition of the Dominion Cabinet had become necessary. Sir John Macdonald was not all that he had once been in health and energy, though his cheeriness of disposition showed no signs of failing. Sir Leonard Tilley had found the Finance Department too great a strain for one of his years and strength, and the ministry was therefore about to lose the services of one of the best trusted of Canadian statesmen. Sir Charles Tupper intended also to shortly retire to the High Commissionership in London, and Sir Alex. Campbell was desirous of resigning his position. To find new men capable of in some measure taking the place of these distinguished veterans was the task which the Premier had to face. And it was all the more important that his selections should be men of vigour and ability because the Riel question was at this moment threatening the party with disintegration and the country with serious disaster.

By a happy stroke of wisdom and good fortune combined, Sir John Macdonald called in Thomas White as Minister of the Interior, and George E. Foster as Minister of Marine and Fisheries. A little later he astonished the Dominion by offering the Ministry of Justice to the Hon. John S. D. Thompson, who accepted the great and unexpected honour; was gazetted on the 25th of September; and after a spirited contest was elected for his old constituency of Antigonish by a majority of 222 over Dr. McIn-

tosh, who opposed him as an Independent Conservative. The appointment of Mr. Thompson was received with mixed feelings. Outside of Nova Scotia he was only known as having been an honest and fearless judge and a politician who had planned well for his Province, but had not been very successful in holding power for himself. It was understood also that the Premier had never even seen the man whom he had first placed on the Supreme Bench of the Province, and had now invited to fill one of the highest posts in his own Government. But so far as the Conservative party was concerned, confidence was felt in what so often seemed to be Sir John Macdonald's unerring judgment of men, and those members of the party who followed politics closely were aware that there must be something remarkable in the new man, or he would never have been called to the Ministry of Justice at a time when the most complicated legal and constitutional issues were looming upon the horizon.

As a whole the press comments were favourable so far as reference to his past career were concerned, and the Maritime papers took care to make that sufficiently well known. *The Mail*, then an organ of the Government, dealt with the appointment in most eulogistic terms, and showed a very comprehensive knowledge of the man and his record. In a leading article on September 25th, the day the announcement was made, it spoke of his "high and unstained personal character"; and stated that as a lawyer, the success of the new minister had been remarkable; that as an orator his style was subdued but effective, and that since 1869 he had been "a most faithful, high-minded, unselfish, and respected advocate of the policy of the great chief of the Liberal-Conservative party of Canada."

On the other hand *The Globe*, writing in a spirit very different from that broadness of view with which it now



HON. MACKENZIE BOWELL, SENATOR,

Fifth Premier of Canada.

treats political appointments, made an amusing statement which in the light of events and history is worth quoting. Speaking of the Cabinet changes generally it declared on the 26th of September that "these changes and shuffles are of very little consequence to the country. The men who remained in the Cabinet and the men who have lately been taken into the Cabinet are small men who will exercise no influence on the country." There was of course some excuse for a partisan assertion of this kind at the time, although it seems a rather harsh one of men who were known to have ability in different lines even if they did not have experience in controlling departments. However, there was discontent even in Conservative circles, and one story goes that a deputation actually did wait upon Sir John Macdonald to express its dissatisfaction. The Premier, it is said, after listening to the complaints made, answered with that well-known and oracular wagging of the head which will never be forgotten by those who have been familiar with it: "Gentlemen, wait until six months have passed before you form your judgment of the new Minister of Justice. Come to me then, if you will, and tell me that I have made a mistake."

CHAPTER V.

The Riel Question.

The opening of the first session of the Parliament of 1886, was perhaps the most critical period in the life of the new Minister of Justice. At a crisis in the history of the government which he had joined and of the party to which he belonged, he found himself called upon to bear the burden of defence against the fiercest and best organized attack in the annals of Canadian legislation. Fresh from the Bench of his Province and long unaccustomed to heated discussions and party strife, he was to endure the lash of sectarian bitterness and sectional prejudice, intensified as it was, by an external and seemingly successful campaign of unscrupulous misrepresentation. Unknown as a speaker to nearly the whole of his critical, or already prejudiced, audience in the House, he had to face the oratorical graces of Mr. Laurier, the powerful eloquence of Mr. Blake, and the fervid utterances of a score of others, who were borne by the excitement of the time to the crest of a storm-tossed political wave.

There can be little doubt that the position of the Ministry was very precarious. The old-time influence of the Conservative party in the Province of Quebec, seemed to have gone forever. The magnetic personality of Sir John A. Macdonald appeared to have lost its power. He was freely denounced in great French-Canadian meetings as "the enemy of our nationality," and was even burned in effigy at Montreal, whilst the Hon. J. A. Chapleau, the

eloquent tribune of the people, was bracketed with Sir Hector Langevin and Sir Adolphe Caron, in public resolutions, as "traitors to their country." Riel was to be the hero of Quebec and one of the political martyrs of his nationality: Mercier was to be the leader of a new movement which in the sacred name of race and religion was to avenge his execution: the Parti-Nationale was to sweep out of existence the enemies of French Canada and of the Roman Catholic Church: Mr. Blake was to stir up the Province of Ontario against those who had committed what 30,000 people on the Champ-des-Mars in Montreal, declared "an act of inhumanity and cruelty unworthy of a civilized nation."

From the moment when the man who had caused so much of sorrow and bloodshed, suffering and death, was executed at Regina, on the 16th of November, 1885, this agitation had grown in force and sunk deeper and deeper into the hearts of the people. Popular passion is always easy to arouse when questions are raised touching even the fringe of creed or nationality, and Mr. Mercier, who was trying to ride into power upon a wave of sectarian prejudice, seemed utterly indifferent to the danger of his course. And in allowing the law to be carried out the Dominion Government had to face a double difficulty. Not only was the situation in Quebec critical: not only did *La Monde*, a Conservative paper, represent the sentiments of its press as a whole in declaring after the execution that "Fanaticism wanted a victim: Riel has been offered as a holocaust: and Orangeism has hanged him for hate and to satisfy an old thirst for revenge": but the remarkable utterances of the *Mail* and the *Orange Sentinel*, provided additional fuel for the flame of excitement. The former had declared on the 3rd of November, preceding the execution, that "as Britons we

believe the conquest will have to be fought over again and Lower Canada may depend upon it, there will be no treaty of 1763." The *Sentinel* declared, in reply to fiery statements from Quebec that the Government did not dare to hang the rebel; that "English-Canadians will not longer suffer this galling bondage: and the day may not be far distant when the call to arms will again resound throughout the Dominion."

Tremendous pressure had been brought to bear upon the French-Canadian Ministers to resign from the Cabinet. They were told, and truly, that Mr Mercier was about to sweep the Province. Many of their Conservative supporters pointed out that refusal to leave a doomed government meant political extinction, and that if they attempted to condone the execution of Riel, even a seat in Parliament would be an impossibility. Whole batches of French-Canadian Conservatives declared that they dare not support the Government in their proposal to let justice take its course, or in their subsequent definite performance of that duty. Meanwhile, Mr. Blake had not made the outlook more pleasant by vigorous speeches in Ontario, during which he denounced the whole North-West policy of the Government. If appearances could be trusted it seemed indeed as though a general break-up of the national Conservative forces was about to take place.

This then was the situation when the Hon. J. S. D. Thompson faced a storm-tossed House of Commons on the 11th of March, and listened with stocial composure to Mr. Landry's long-anticipated and now famous motion :—

"That this House feels it its duty to express its deep regret that the sentence of death passed upon Louis Riel, convicted of high treason, was allowed to be carried into execution."



HON. WILFRID LAURIER, Q.C., M.P.,

Leader of the Canadian Opposition.

Mr. Landry's speech was the key-note of much that followed during a week's debate. He described the Government's action in a strain of the fiercest invective. It was a provocation flung at the face of a whole nationality: it was a breach of the laws of justice: it was an evidence of weakness on the part of the Ministry: it was the gratification of a long-sought vengeance: it was the wanton sacrifice of the life of a French-Canadian Catholic upon the altar of sectarian hatred and bigotry. He spoke of the petitions that had been disregarded, and considered the actions of Riel to be those of an insane man or of a monomaniac. He quoted the pardoning of Jefferson Davis, the exile of Arabi Pashi, and the treatment of Abd-el-Kader by France, as affording ample precedents for the forgiveness of Riel. Lt. Col. Amyot followed, and declared with all the vigour of passionate declamation, that after an examination of the record in Riel's case, the Ministry had ordered the hanging in spite of the favourable nature of the record: in spite of the recommendation to mercy by the jury: in spite of the madness of Riel, which was admitted and proved: in spite of the petitions which they had received. "We go further" added the orator, "we say they did it after mature deliberation, in order to please a certain section of the country, not caring about offending the other."

Many others spoke. Mr. Clarke Wallace declared that out of 2000 Orange Lodges in the country not more than six had passed any resolutions whatever upon the subject. Mr. M. C. Cameron denounced the Government as having "trafficked in the destiny of a fellow mortal." Mr. Laurier made a speech which was remarkable for the purity of its diction, the beauty of its language and style. He stated his belief, and the belief of his Province, that the execution of Riel was "the sacrifice of a life not to inexor-

CHAPTER VI.

The Fisheries Question.

Writing a number of years after the crucial point in the questions at issue had been faced, Sir Charles Tupper declared that he only accepted the post of Plenipotentiary to Washington in 1887 upon the condition that he should be accompanied by the Hon. J. S. D. Thompson as legal adviser. There is no doubt that he very fully apprehended the situation, and after sitting for a time in the same Government with the Minister of Justice, understood how great the value his wide knowledge and clear grasp of international law would be in such a connection. It was the revival of the old, old question which had been settled in 1818, settled again in 1871, and re-adjusted by the Halifax Commission of 1877. Through the deliberate abrogation of the Fisheries' Clause of the Washington Treaty by the American Government in 1885, the Canadian Administration found itself face to face with the alternative of giving the Americans a free hand in the immensly valuable inshore fisheries of the Dominion, or else of falling back upon the treaty of 1818 which gave full power for the regulation and control of foreign fishermen in British waters.

The Government naturally took the latter course; made the necessary arrangements for the complete protection of Canadian interests and British subjects within the three mile limit; and prepared to endure with patience the outburst of American indignation which was of course inevitable. But unfortunately the United States refused to recognize the Treaty of 1818 as having any force in this connection; its Government denounced the protective regula-

tions as unfriendly and illegal; its fishing interests clamoured for action, while their men and vessels proceeded boldly into Canadian waters and did as they liked without regard to either law or license. Armed coasting-steamers were at once despatched to the disputed fishing grounds with orders to capture and carry into the nearest British port any vessel found poaching within British jurisdiction. These orders were freely obeyed, and during the next two years many American vessels were seized, the cases tried by the Canadian Maritime Courts, and not infrequently the cargoes and vessels confiscated. More than once there were collisions between excited crews. More than once bloodshed was only averted by the merest chance, and not infrequently during this perilous period, the possibility of a war between the Empire and the Republic seemed to hang upon trifles light as air. Many were the menaces from the other side of the line. The abrogation of the bonding privilege, the refusal to permit Canadian vessels to enter American ports, the cessation of all commercial intercourse, were each in turn threatened either by Congress or the President. Canada, however, stood firmly by what the Government believed to be its rights, and the Minister of Justice was at one with the Minister of Marine and Fisheries in the determination to uphold the legal rights and Maritime interests of the Dominion and of its large fishing population.

The result was that on November 15th, 1887, a Commission met at Washington to discuss the points at issue and make an attempt at settlement. The British Plenipotentiaries were the Rt. Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, M.P., the brilliant and keen-witted English Radical; the Hon. Lionel Sackville West, British Minister to the United States, and Sir Charles Tupper. The American Commissioners were Hon. Thomas F. Bayard, United States Secretary of State, and Messrs. W. L Putnam and James B. Angell. With Sir

CHAPTER VII.

The Jesuits' Estates Act.

The action of the Dominion Government in the case of Riel, had stirred to a white heat the prejudices of ultra Catholics in the Province of Quebec. Its refusal to disallow the Jesuits' Estates Act was now destined to have a similar effect upon the ultra Protestants of the Province of Ontario. The ablest defence of the refusal to pander to the sectarian elements of French-speaking Canada, was made by Mr. John S. D. Thompson. And his great deliverance during the debate upon Colonel O'Brien's famous motion, defended up to the hilt the Government's policy of refusal to interfere with the Provincial legislation of Quebec, at the dictation of the sectarian elements in English-speaking Canada. By the first speech the Minister of Justice made his reputation. By the second he confirmed and enhanced it. And curiously enough they were each made upon opposite sides of the semi-religious issue which has more than once threatened the Dominion with serious disaster.

In connection with this Jesuits' Estates question there seemed to be combined nearly every element which could embarrass a Government, provoke ill-will between the Provinces, raise sectarian issues, and make the action of the Dominion Ministry unpopular whichever line it might ultimately take. The Premier of Quebec, who had planned and passed the legislation, was intensely unpopular in Ontario and other Provinces, because of his speeches during the Riel agitation. The preamble to the Bill as carried through the Parliament of Quebec was exceedingly offensive



Sir Frank Smith, K.D.M.G., Senator,

Minister without Portfolio.

in its terms to a great majority of Protestants. The measure itself seemed to be specially adapted to misrepresentation and to the uses of those who might and did believe in all honesty that Roman Catholicism was advancing its influence and power to a dangerous degree throughout the Dominion of Canada. And, although it may appear a delicate matter to refer to, there can be no doubt that the personal position of the Minister of Justice, as a converted member of that great church, was freely used to enhance this injurious sentiment.

The first stages in the history of the affair did not indicate any serious trouble. On the 3rd of July, 1888, a Bill for the settlement of the long-standing dispute between the Jesuits, the Clergy of the Roman Catholic Church, and the Province of Quebec, was passed without opposition or protest through the Lower House of the Quebec Legislature. It passed the Upper House also without opposition, and in due course was assented to by the Lieut.-Governor and became law, subject within a certain period to disallowance by the Dominion authorities should the legislation be considered unconstitutional or dangerous to the interests of the country as a whole. At first there was neither opposition nor serious criticism. With the exception of the Huntingdon Gleaner, not a paper in Quebec discussed the matter from a hostile standpoint, and the Protestant Committee of Public Instruction quietly accepted the promise of $60,000, included in the measure. Mr. Mercier was therefore justified in concluding while the Bill was before the Legislature that there could be no very strong feeling against the proposal in the Province interested. Indeed the Hon. Mr. Lynch, a Protestant representative, declared during the passage of the measure, that "there was nothing in it alarming in character."

The Hon. Mr. Starnes, in the Legislative Council, said

that "Protestants and Catholics ought to be satisfied with the manner in which the question is now settled." The Hon. David Ross, declared that "we had to deal with a question of justice and I gave it my support. The Protestants whom I represent in the Cabinet are well satisfied with the settlement." None the less however, Mr. Mercier was necessarily well aware of the ultimate result of such legislation, especially when the introductory portion of the Bill was worded in a way so peculiarly offensive to large elements of the national population. He supplied the provocation, and it is hardly unjust in view of his previous and subsequent record, to surmise that he did it deliberately, knowing the advantage which a sectarian agitation in Ontario would be to his own political position.

The origin of the question was simple enough. Stripped of all technicalities and complex developments, it seems that in 1791 the King of Great Britain issued a proclamation suppressing the Order of the Jesuits in Canada, but leaving them the use of their estates so long as those who were then members should remain alive. In 1800 the last Jesuit died and the properties, it was claimed, were escheated to the Crown. But in cases of escheat a liberal proportion is generally appropriated to the carrying out of the intention of the donors, or to indemnifying those who morally may consider themselves entitled to it. And the re-instatement of the Jesuits at a later period, together with their incorporation, gave them this moral right—such as it was. Meanwhile through the suppression for a time of the Order by the Pope, it was also claimed that the estates instead of reverting to the Crown, passed to the dioceses in which they were placed. Hence the claims of the Quebec Bishops, and a situation generally which for a long period either precluded the sale of the lands by the Government or very seriously hampered its action in dealing with them.

At every step it was met by protests from the united hierarchy of Quebec demanding that the lands should not be diverted from the charitable and religious purposes to which they had been originally devoted, in some cases by private donors, in others by grants from the French King. Under these conditions, and it must be remembered in a Catholic Province, several Governments had attempted to adjust the question but without success, because they did not like to negotiate upon the fact that there was only one authority whom the Jesuits and the Bishops as branches of the same church, could each recognize as an arbiter, and as having the legal power to act for them in the settlement of the dispute.

By the calling in of the Pope, Mr. Mercier solved the problem, but by the way in which it was done, he created a storm in Ontario which it has taken years to calm. Summed up in a few words the head of the Roman Catholic Church consented to perform the part of an arbiter and appointed the archbishop of Quebec to act as his attorney in the matter. This latter arrangement was cancelled, and in a letter dated 7th of May, 1887, which was freely used in the subsequent Ontario campaign, the Pope states that he has "reserved to himself" the right to settle the question. That is to say, he reserved to himself the authority previously given to the archbishop. Without, however, going into the matter further at this stage, it seems clear that the business arrangement was not in itself as bad as it has been depicted. The Quebec Premier claimed that some settlement was absolutely necessary; that the Pope was the only authority recognized in a church dispute by the two religious bodies in question; and that the $400,000 was made by his intervention a full, legal settlement of claims aggregating $2,000,000. Nevertheless the introduction of his preamble into the bill and some of the

correspondence itself, was a gross illustration of political demagogism and a dangerous menace to the good-feeling which still survived the ebullition of fanaticism which had been seen a couple of years before in Quebec itself.

There could be no doubt about the sentiment which the publication of the bill speedily aroused in many sections of the Upper Province. Aggressive Protestantism was stirred up; Orange Lodges passed denunciatory resolutions the *Mail* renewed its vigorous and able but unjust and unwise attacks, upon Quebec and the great religious institutions of that Province; the Jesuits were painted in the blackest shades which tongue and pen could produce; and Equal Rights and Disallowance became the cries of the hour. Though this ebullition of strong and sincere sentiment was confined to a limited number of the people it had the usual effect elsewhere. Extremes in one direction are almost sure to produce the opposite extreme. The Protestants of Quebec therefore commenced to think themselves aggrieved and a section of them began to agitate and pass resolutions which served to fan the flame in Ontario. The unwise language which is always used in sectarian disputes stirred up both sides to the controversy and very soon the French-Canadian press was denouncing the fanaticism of the Upper Province in language very like that used by many Ontario papers during the Riel discussion.

This then was the position of affairs which Sir John Thompson had to face before the country, and in the great Parliamentary debate which soon became imminent. With the forgetfulness of his stand in the Riel matter, which always characterises a busy public, he was looked upon by ultra Protestants as the central figure in a great drama of surrender to the mandates of the Church which he was known to regard with such devotion. It did not seem to occur to many of them, although the great mass of enlight-



THE EARL OF DERBY, G.C.B., P.C.,

Late Governor-General of Canada

CHAPTER VIII.

French in the North-West.

Whatever else may be said regarding the debates in the House of Commons during the period in which Sir John Thompson's influence was felt within its walls, no charge can be made that they lacked interest. The Riel debate produced a score of eloquent speeches covering the whole ground of international law, and of experience in the punishment of rebels and the treatment and trial of political prisoners. The Jesuits' Estates agitation in the same way had been the cause of much oratory of a high rank and was conspicuous for research into the older history of Canada and into the constitutional powers once vested in the French King, then transferred to the monarchy of Britain, and now held in the main by the Government of Canada or the Executive of its Provinces.

As studies in history, in constitutional law, and in the duties owed to one another by partners in a Federal compact, these debates may have been illustrative of the fact that good does sometimes come out of evil. Perhaps it would be more correct to say however that the evil which might have come out of the agitations in question, was to a considerable extent averted by judicious action on the part of men who were Canadians first, Provincialists second. And the discussion of the questions introduced into the Dual Language debate of 1890, was not less interesting and valuable in this educational sense than were the others which had been dealt with. The question in itself was an inevitable product of the race and religion

cry which had been commenced by the admirers of Louis Riel, promoted by the assaults upon the Jesuits' Estates legislation, continued in the French language discussion and terminated, it may be hoped, in the Manitoba Schools' case.

In all of these Mr. D'Alton McCarthy took a prominent part, and in all but the first was vigorously opposed to Sir John Thompson. Even in that one he took a much stronger and more pronounced stand than the Minister of Justice would have been able to support, and in fact clearly indicated the path he finally entered upon. During the Ontario agitation which followed the Jesuits' Estates enactment, Mr. McCarthy had naturally drifted into the position of leader, whether nominal or not does not matter, of the element which considered French-Canadian domination a fact; which believed in the abolition of Separate Schools; which feared the influence of the French language in the Dominion, and believed a Catholic Quebec to be a menace to a united Canada.

It was therefore to be expected that he would act as the spokesman of this sentiment in Parliament, and be recognized for good or ill as its representative by French-Canada. And during the earlier part of the Session of 1890, it was fully understood that something was to be heard from Mr. McCarthy, concerning the French language question in the North-West. A discussion had been going on in portions of the press as to the desirability of freeing the infant provinces of the great prairies from the alleged burdens of a dual language. Sundry resolutions demanding such action were passed by Ontario mass-meetings, while, very naturally, the French papers, and of course Mr. Mercier, began with vigour the defence of their cherished privileges and of the right to use their mother-tongue, in the Territoral Legislature and the Dominion Parliament.

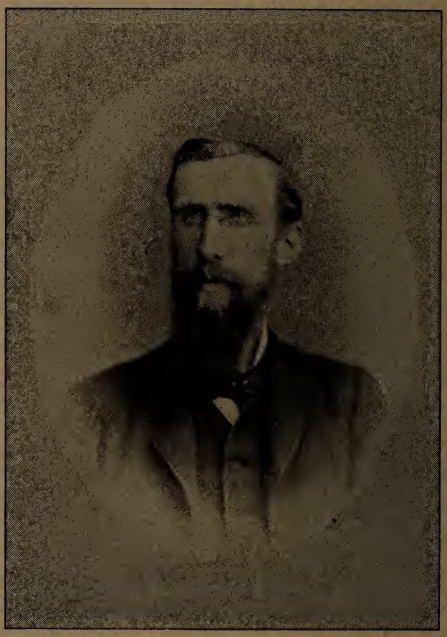
The Toronto *Mail*, on the one side denounced a dual language as the root of national disunion, the source of many Canadian troubles, and a difficulty which had to be removed so far as official recognition was concerned, first in the Territories and then in the Parliament of the Dominion. *La Verité*, of Montreal, replied with the violence which had so far characterized much of its conduct in discussing inter-provincial questions, and the pen and ink war waged fiercely with an occasional speech from Principal Caven or Mr. McCarthy, from Mr. Mercier or Mr. Tarte. Public opinion was disturbed upon the subject, but not very thoroughly convinced in any part of the Dominion. The unnecessary mixing of the questions connected with a dual language as it affected the North-West prairies under legislation made in 1877 when no one lived up there; and as it affected the Province of Quebec under historic compact, injured seriously the chances of any successful result. In the one case moderate men everywhere saw a possibility of reform even if there was no particular local demand for it. In the latter proposition those who studied the matter at all saw difficulties which might well shake Confederation to its base.

CHAPTER IX.

The Elections of 1891.

The conflict at the polls which commenced by the dissolution of Parliament on the 4th of February, 1891, was in many respects the most momentous in the history of Canada. In 1874 a general election had overthrown a Government charged with corruption, and, whether right or wrong in this particular application of the principle, had clearly demonstrated that Canadians will not endure even a suspicion of dishonesty in their rulers. In 1878 protection to national industries had been proclaimed emphatically as the national policy of the country, and in 1882, amid the fair weather of good times and abounding prosperity that policy had been confirmed and strengthened. In 1887 a dangerous racial and religious agitation in Quebec had been rendered almost harmless by the patriotism of its people in rallying to the support of a Government which, whatever its faults, had acted in the best interests of the Dominion by allowing the law to take its course in the case of Louis Riel.

But four years later a new question had arisen and one which involved a clear and distinct issue to all who would honestly read the signs of the times. Leaving to one side all partisan cries and strictly partisan statements; accepting as a fact the loyalty of the great mass of the people in both parties; waiving present consideration of the utterances of men like Wiman and Farrer: it yet seems perfectly plain that the country had to consider during



HON. GEO. E. FOSTER, D.C.L., M.P.,

Canadian Minister of Finance.

that campaign the principles of British unity, British commerce, and British sympathy, as against Continental unity, Continental trade, and Continental sympathy. There were side issues, of which the cry for Equal Rights was by no means the least, but this question of the British Empire versus "the Continent to which we belong," was the dominant and absorbing matter submitted to the consideration and decision of the people.

In stating this fact there is no intention of charging any one, whether leader or follower, with annexationist sentiments or with personal disloyalty. But in dealing with the principles which during this important contest, Sir John A. Macdonald defended with such vigour as to fatally undermine his health; which Sir Charles Tupper came from England to help in supporting; which Sir John Thompson aided by many a speech and with all the force of his clear and logical eloquence; which other Conservative leaders joined in urging with a passionate earnestness unusual in Canadian politics, it must be made clear that there really was some great underlying element of serious import.

Apart, therefore, from specific utterances and party charges, the great issue lay in the tendencies of the two policies. Everyone knows that a new country, like a young man, should have some high ideal, some great ambition, some future hope which constitutes in itself a living principle of conduct and a substantial basis for present action. During the dozen years in which it had held power, the Conservative party, with all its sins of omission and commission—and no public organization is devoid of them—had evolved and placed before the people some such principle and plan of national development. It was in this that Sir John Macdonald had shown his supreme statesmanship. Without the sentiment which surrounds the

ideal of Canada for Canadians within the British Empire, the National Policy would have been a mere fiscal experiment, lasting as long as the good times continued, but blown away like chaff before the first storm of depression or financial difficulty.

But when the people clearly recognized that the whole tendency of this new policy was to build up the resources of Canada, by the development of trade, inter-communication, and investment within the Empire: when they saw that it was none the less British for being Canadian: that it was safe from the charge of dependence on either Great Britain or the United States: and that it combined national sentiment and progress with a distinct tendency towards closer Imperial connection in the future; the natural effect was a strengthening of the protective system by the support of a large element of the people who considered loyalty of the first importance in conducting the affairs of our rising nationality.

On the other side of the political fence there had been, however, for several years, as Sir John Thompson pointed in several of his more important speeches, a tendency to deprecate sentiment in the conduct of public affairs: to denounce loyalty as unimportant, or, at the best, of secondary importance: to place alleged material interests first, and national ideals and aspirations second.

CHAPTER X.

Death of Sir John Macdonald.

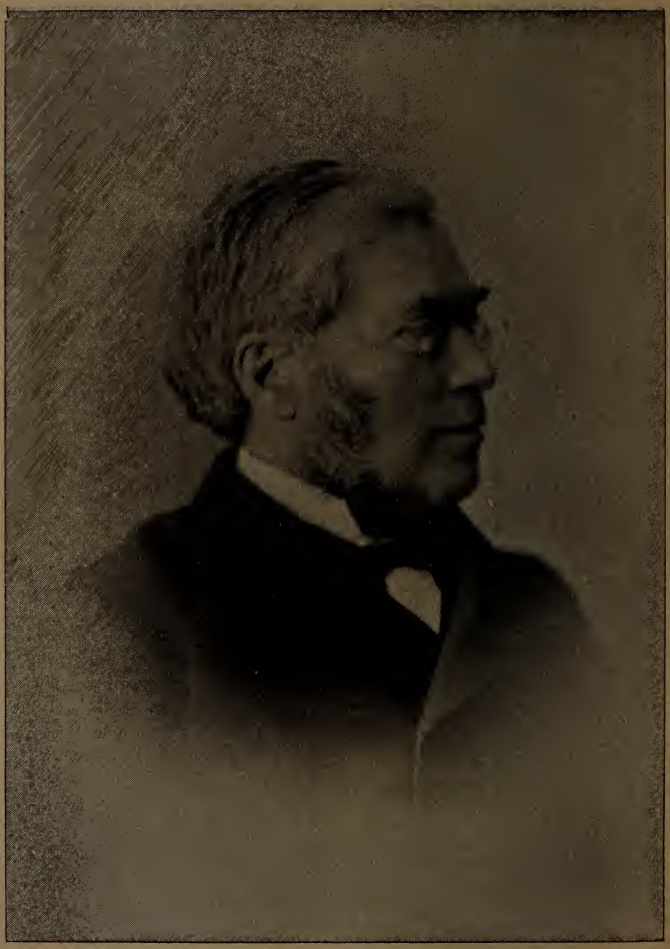
On the 24th of May it became known to the public that the illness of Sir John A. Macdonald was somewhat serious. He himself did not appear to regard it in that light, however, and during the next day or two improved considerably. On the 29th, when the fatal stroke fell upon him, he had been dictating letters; holding a long conversation with Sir John Thompson upon questions of public policy and party tactics; and receiving a visit from the Governor-General. But shortly afterwards the paralytic seizure came and stilled the busy brain, numbed the marvellous faculties, and silenced forever the voice which had so long been the voice of Canada. During the week of anxious waiting which followed, a sorrowing people, a sympathetic Empire, and a Queen, who is as great a woman as she is a sovereign, watched beside the sick-bed at Earnscliffe, where the greatest of Colonial statesmen, the Father of Canadian confederation and the champion of Imperial unity, lay fighting his sad and hopeless battle.

As days and hours went by, and the great leader was passing slowly away, people began to realize what enormous consequences might follow. Sir John Macdonald to many minds seemed the actual embodiment of Canadian Conservatism. To them he was the party, and without him the party was nothing. Others, who understood more clearly the condition of affairs, knew that there were several men quite able to take the leadership, and that fore-

most amongst them stood the Minister of Justice. Outside of Canada, however, there is no doubt that the name of Sir John Macdonald was at that time the only one which could be said to bear an international or imperial reputation. He had grown up with Canada. His policy had made itself felt abroad, and his name, in many places, was synonymous with that of the Dominion. His death, therefore, might involve political chaos, it might result in the disintegration of the party he had formed and led so long, it did undoubtedly imply serious political difficulties.

Parliament promptly adjourned upon the news of the Premier's fatal illness, and from that time till the end came, upon the memorable 6th of June, 1891, the pulse of the Canadian people was stirred as it had never been before. Publicly, of course, there could be no serious discussion as to the future leader, as to the future of the party or of the country. But privately there was a great deal. Ottawa was disturbed as it had not been since the days of 1873, when the fate of Sir John Macdonald's first ministry hung in the balance of a great parliamentary trial. Letters from all over the Dominion poured into the capital, rumours of a hundred kinds were current, considerations of all sorts were discussed. It was recognized then, and in the week which followed the Premier's death, that Sir John Thompson, by force of ability and political service, was the inevitable leader—if not at once, then in the near future.

Had there been an impression that Sir Charles Tupper would have cared to take up political life again, the opinion of the party would have probably united upon him, but the circumstances being otherwise there seemed a large majority of sentiment in favour of the Minister of Justice. Here, however, the sectarian element intervened. His religion it was claimed, in connection with the Jesuits' Estates



Hon. Sir Oliver Mowat, K.C.M.G., Q.C., M.P.P.

and other questions, would fatally prejudice the chances of the party in certain portions of the country and it would be better if, for a time at least, the Premiership of the Dominion were placed in the hands of someone who, in the existing crisis, would be able to unite all sections of the Conservative forces. The name of the Hon. J. J. C. Abbott was suggested in this connection and his private correspondence at the time, as well as that of Sir John Thompson, illustrates the utter unselfishness which characterised the two men. In a letter written to an intimate friend on the 4th of June, and only two days before Sir John Macdonald's death, Mr. Abbott commented very frankly upon the proposal that the leadership should fall to him. He said:

"DEAR MR. ——,"

"I have heard from many people lately very similar ideas of the situation to yours—but from none whose opinions I should place more confidence in. But I hate politics, and what are considered their appropriate methods. I hate notoriety, public meetings, public speeches, caucuses, and every thing that I know of that is apparently the necessary incident of politics—except doing public

CHAPTER XI.

The Scandal Campaign.

No country in the world can boast absolute purity in politics and administration. Few in this respect have stood as high in the scale as Canada. Elections in the mother-land are known to cost millions; the constituencies are carefully "nursed" for years by would-be candidates at great personal expense; contracts upon occasion are notoriously given to inefficient concerns upon very insufficient grounds. Yet no one will call England a really corrupt country. In the United States unfortunately there can be no doubt about the matter. There is corruption in the Presidential elections, in the Congressional elections, in the State contests, in the Civic government, and in the city elections. It is a far cry from the Pension Bureau to the Lexow inquiry, but in all the varied departments of American politics between the one and the other, there is probably boodling to be found in a greater or lesser degree.

It is a matter of deep regret that the Dominion has not been able to keep its skirts altogether clean in this connection. But there are degrees of offence in this as in every other case. And, during the period now under consideration there were two parties to the charges of corruption. Quebec had covered itself with disgrace by allowing its Government to fall into the hands of a small clique of men who, under the brilliant but erratic and dangerous leadership of Count Mercier, had pillaged the Province without pity or remorse; had enjoyed for years a deficit of

over a million dollars annually; had increased the debt by some $15,000,000; had rioted in luxury, in costly houses, in expensive horses, in journeys and fetes. The Baie de Chaleurs' case brought much of this home to the Provincial Premier and his Ministry; the Royal Commission did more in developing the investigation; the Lieut.-Governor finally gave the people their opportunity by dismissing his advisers and calling in new men and a new party. The elections which followed closed the drama and restored the Province to its former honorable position, while forever burying under the all-powerful ballot-box, the men who had disgraced its name and temporarily blackened its repute.

The Dominion case was different. The charges made against members of the Government were claimed by Sir John Thompson to be bitterly partisan; were proved, so far as personal corruption was concerned, to be without foundation; and dealt in the main with a system rather than with individual actions. Where charges were specified and proved against officials, punishment was swift and sure, though never merciless. Where they were vague, as in the case of Sir Adolphe Caron, every effort was made by Sir John to bring them to a point suited for investigation. Where they were, however, mere fishing expeditions, intended only for the purpose of throwing partisan mud in the hope that some would stick, he very properly refused to aid them or allow of their being carried beyond a certain limit.

But none the less the session which followed upon the death of Sir John Macdonald was a severe strain upon the heart and mind of a man such as the Minister of Justice. It may as well be frankly admitted that the great Premier whom Canada had just lost forever, was not afraid to use methods and means in building up the Dominion which would have been absolutely impossible to Sir John Thomp-

son. They were necessary in the government of a new country, having crude and ill-defined institutions and strong internal opposition; permeated in many parts with lack of confidence in its own powers and resources and opportunities; and possessed of an immense area together with small available means for the management of great party conflicts.

In England party government is reduced to a science, and the vast sums of money required to manipulate elections are never seen or perhaps heard of, by the heads of the organizations, except in the most vague and general way. But in Canada the barest expenses can hardly be met, and money for the most legitimate and necessary purposes is difficult to obtain. Ministers here are more or less the party managers—though the fact is to be regretted—and it is therefore easy for some of the money contributed by strong supporters to come, without corrupt intent or consequences, from men who have received, or might receive in the future, an interest in government contracts or appointments.



SIR A. P. CARON, K.C.M.G., M.P.,

Postmaster-General of Canada.

CHAPTER XII.

The Census and Redistribution.

To the people of a young country the census is always an interesting consideration. To the politicians in Canada, where a redistribution of the seats takes place every decade, should the movements of population warrant a change, it is of special interest. Much was expected from the census of 1891, and the disappointment which followed was natural though not altogether justifiable. A few pessimists expected it to show a steady drain of population from the country, a decrease in the total number of its inhabitants, a lack of progress in manufactures, and in all the elements of prosperity. But optimists, on the other hand, hoped it would show a population of six millions at least, and a tremendous industrial development.

An army of 4,300 enumerators and commissioners were employed under the command of Mr. George Johnson, Dominion Statistician, and it was announced that the regulations respecting absentees, and the rules to prevent duplication, would be unusually strict. In England it may be said that 40,000 enumerators, and in British India nearly one million men, were employed in the same work. The difficulties encountered in taking a Canadian census are by no means small. The immense area of the Dominion had to be traversed by every conceivable method of locomotion. A steamer amid the islands and indents of the Pacific coast; pack-horses in the Rocky Mountain valleys; dog-trains on the plains of the Saskatchewan; canoes and port-

ages in the great lake and river district to the north of Lake Superior; buck-boards and boats on the prairies and in the rivers of Manitoba; a schooner in the Gulf of St. Lawrence; slow and toilsome pedestrianism in Algoma and other districts. Three months, however, sufficed to give to the public the full returns.

A summary of the results shows that the population of Canada had increased from 3,686,000 in 1871, to 4,324,000 in 1881, and thence to 4,829,000 in 1891. The increase, therefore, during the preceding decade had only amounted to 504,000, and there was naturally a good deal of disappointment and dissatisfaction expressed. A section of the press was, if such a phrase may be used, almost jubilant in its sorrow. The census seemed to show a complete failure in the vigorous efforts which had been made to promote immigration and to keep the people in the country, while by implication it was made to prove the absolute failure of the National Policy of protection. But second thoughts are proverbially best, and it was not long before people saw that there were two sides to the question.

Upon reflection, it seemed clear that population, following the universal trend of modern society, had during the past decade drifted into the cities. In protectionist Canada as in free trade Britain, people had flocked to the centres of population and industry. The larger cities of the United States had attracted many in spite of the inferiority which most Canadians believe to exist in American institutions, customs and modes of life. The introduction of agricultural machinery had further helped to deplete rural populations by doing away with much of the hired help formerly required, while the decrease in the price of cereals had in all countries enhanced the tendency to prefer city work to farm life. Just as in many portions of the United States population had decreased through the movement to

other parts of the country, so in Canada many sections had been influenced by the proximity of the United States, and it must be said also, by the praise of everything American which is, as Sir John Thompson more than once claimed, so often heard from the lips of certain Canadian politicians.

To Mr. Abbott's Government the local increases and decreases of population brought the unpleasant embarassment of a necessary redistribution of seats, and upon Sir John Thompson as leader of the House of Commons fell the burden of the work in connection with this difficult and never popular matter. He was compelled to alter the representation in some places by cutting off a member altogether, in others by adding one, and again in others, by a re-organization of the electoral limits. Abuse in such a case was inevitable and he had to bear the brunt of it.

CHAPTER XIII.

Sir John Thompson becomes Premier.

For some time previous to the retirement of Sir John Abbott it had become clear that he could not remain at the head of the Government very much longer. The Minister of Justice was during this period the practical chief of the Administration, as he had been the real leader of the Conservative party since the death of Sir John Macdonald. And this can be said without in any way reflecting upon the great services undoubtedly rendered by Sir J. J. C. Abbott in a time of trial and supreme party difficulty. But Sir John Thompson was leader of the House of Commons and his forceful character had so impressed itself upon the country while he held that position, and events had so clearly combined to make him the central figure in the politics of the hour, that it was not at all surprising to find him accepted by the public as the next Premier, long before the Governor-General had sent for him to form a ministry.

The logic of circumstances is sometimes irresistible, and the rise of a strong man in politics, as in most other matters, is occasionally aided by the absence of qualifications which to many people may have appeared absolutely essential. Though gifted with rare ability Sir John Thompson possessed one defect which seemed almost fatal to his success as a party leader. In ordinary cases a man who aspires to control a democratic electorate and a complex political machine, must possess the capacity of creating enthusiasm amongst his party followers and of stirring up a sentiment of warm personal allegiance. This the incoming Premier



HON. EDWARD BLAKE, Q.C., M.P. FOR LONGFORD,

Late Leader of the Liberal Party in Canada.

did not even pretend to or attempt. Yet it is probable that his dignified and reserved manner, combined with his reputation for honesty, kept at a distance the corrupt elements which instinctively seek the political centre here as in other countries, and helped his party through the critical scandal session and other unpleasant occasions, as no qualities of geniality, and mere personal graces of manner could have possibly done.

Up to his time it is also very questionable whether a Roman Catholic could have maintained himself in the Premiership of Canada. Before Confederation it had been possible, but under very different circumstances as regards population and balance of religious power. And the peculiar fortune which had compelled him to deal with such important issues in connection with race and creed, had apparently augmented this difficulty. But in reality it all tended to bring into prominence a question which the nation —if it were to be a nation—could only answer in one way. And that answer was greatly facilitated by the very strength of Sir John's convictions and the pronounced nature of his stand upon the subjects with which he had had to deal. For Parliament, the party, or the press, to refuse under such circumstances to recognize him freely, fully, and honestly, as the heir to a position so well earned by ability and service, was to put out of court one-third of the Canadian people; shake the very basis of Canadian national life; and place the country finally under the fatal influence of bitter sectarian strife. It is therefore probable that the absence of the very qualifications which might have seemed most essential to Sir John Thompson's rise in power and position, contributed rather than otherwise to his success in public life. But, of course, only the certainty of his great ability could have enabled him to make these hostile circumstances subservient to personal use. Otherwise, his cold manner would

have involved Parliamentary unpopularity and loss of influence as a leader, while the religious difficulty would have hopelessly prejudiced any inferior man with a strong section of the people.

On November 25th, 1892, the retirement which had been imminent for some time was announced, coupled with the fact that Sir John S. D. Thompson had been summoned by His Excellency the Earl of Aberdeen to form a new Cabinet. A correspondent of one of the papers went forthwith to interview the new Premier and in the course of the evening found him at his house in Lisgar St., Ottawa. He describes a children's party which was being held, with the usual merry-making, home-made taffy and other delights of childhood, and then expresses surprise at the fact that Sir John was spending the evening at home "in the most ordinary domestic manner imaginable." This apparently trifling sentence shows how little a public man's real character and home life may be understood. And perhaps in view of the extreme publicity which prevails concerning domestic life in the United States it is just as well that such should be the case.



Gateway of Windsor Castle.

CHAPTER XIV.

Manitoba Schools Legislation.

Manitoba has contributed several difficult problems for national solution. It produced Riel; it developed a hot agitation for Provincial rights; it has given the Dominion a separate school question. Struggles over religious education are, of course, by no means uncommon in Canada, and the one which Sir John Thompson had to deal with has been neither better nor worse than difficulties in the same connection which most other countries have at times had to face. Prior to 1863 Ontario was torn with dissensions concerning its educational system, and the Hon. George Brown led in an agitation against Roman Catholic separate schools, which was as earnest as it was finally ineffectual.

The result of this prolonged conflict was that it became tolerably clear, for good or ill, that it was impossible to harmonize Protestants and Roman Catholics upon the question of education, and that it only remained for the framers of Confederation to effect some compromise by which a Protestant minority in Quebec and a Roman Catholic minority in Ontario should be provided with a secure system of separate schools. This was achieved by giving them in each case a constitutional guarantee of all rights and privileges existing at the time of the Union. They were, necessarily, subject to the jurisdiction, in other respects, of the Provincial Legislatures; and, curiously enough, the concessions made to the supporters of minority schools in each of these two Provinces have been the cause of complaints from the religious majority. The separate

schools, therefore, have had nothing to complain of in either Ontario or Quebec.

But in Manitoba it has been very different. The system was not the same as elsewhere; the Province did not enter the Dominion under similar conditions; and the fate of the schools has since become involved in the general and complex question of Provincial rights. Manitoba entered the Union in 1870. The population was about equally divided, between Catholics and Protestants, and as a large influx of French Canadians was expected in the future, it was at that time very generally believed that the balance would be more evenly preserved than has been the case. Under these circumstances the Dominion Parliament had to consider the power which it might be desirable to invest the future majority with, and, following the precedent of the Confederation Act, authority was given to the Legislature over education, subject to the preservation of rights existing at the time of the Union. And it was afterwards claimed that the privilege of an appeal to the Governor-General-in-Council was also allowed in the event of any of those rights being infringed.

It has been since admitted that no law, ordinance or regulation existed at the time of union with respect to education. The point of the future dispute turned, therefore, upon how far the "practice" then prevalent was a privilege and right under the laws. Archbishop Tache, whose evidence in the subsequent Barrett case was accepted as accurate and complete, states that there were a number of effective schools for children, some of them being regulated and controlled by the Roman Catholic Church, and others by various Protestant denominations. The means required for the support of the Catholic schools were supplied partly by fees and partly out of funds contributed to the Church by its members. During this period neither Catholics nor



HON. W. E. SANFORD,

Dominion Senator.

Protestants had interest in or control over any schools but those pertaining to their respective beliefs.

In 1871, shortly after joining the Dominion, a law was passed by the Manitoban Legislature which established a system of denominational education in what were then called the common schools. By this act twelve electoral divisions, comprising in the main a Protestant population, were to be considered as constituting twelve Protestant school districts, under the management of the Protestant section of the Board of Education. Similarly, twelve dis tricts, made up chiefly of a Roman Catholic population, were constituted an equal number of Catholic school districts, and were placed under the control of the Catholic section of the Provincial Education Board. Each school division raised the contribution required in addition to the amount given from the public funds, as might be decided at its annual meeting. And without the special sanction of its section of the Board of Education, only one school could be established in each district.

CHAPTER XV.

Canada and the United States.

Upon no question was the stand taken by Sir John Thompson more clear and distinct, more honourable and popular, than his position regarding Canadian relations with the United States. He was known to hold strong opinions as to American treatment of the Dominion, and concerning the policy for Canada to adopt in return. He despised any attitude of weakness or timidity; he disliked all bluster or attempts at intimidation; he was honestly anxious to be upon the friendliest terms with the great Republic, which might be compatible with the protection and development of Canadan interests. But he was firm as a rock in the refusal to discuss any reciprocity which might endanger national industries or give the slightest hostile treatment to British interests.

For many years past the American government has been apparently willing to come to some commercial arrangement with Canada which might give the manufacturers of the United States control of the markets of the Dominion, and at the same time weaken British connection by the congenial process of cutting away the ground under British trade and diminishing the Imperial sentiment in both Canada and England through a commercial system of discrimination against the products of the mother-country. To this end the Commercial Union movement was aided by American influence and, according to party statements, by American money. For this thinly disguised purpose, the

fulminations of Mr. Goldwin Smith against Canadian protection were joyfully welcomed by the enthusiastic supporters of American protection. With this in view, resolutions favourable to commercial relations of the closest kind were passed by Congress, and limited reciprocity had been absolutely refused by the Government. Now and then, when the success of other methods was recognised for the moment as impossible, threats were freely used against the Canadian Pacific Railway, attacks were made upon the Bonding system, or fiscal coercion was tried such as is embodied in the agricultural schedule of the McKinley bill.

Yet it can be safely said that Canada has more than done its duty towards the United States. It has never abrogated a treaty, never broken an arrangement, never obtained American territory by playing upon the natural weakness of friendly negotiators. It has given much and received little. Many unavailing attempts have been made to obtain a fair measure of reciprocity. Friendly manifestations have been constant from the days when 40,000 Canadians served in the armies of the North, to the time when all Canada joined the Republic in mourning for the murdered Garfield. The partial abrogation of the Washington Treaty, the Behring Sea seizures, the Atlantic Fisheries' dispute, and the Washington negotiations of 1892, fill in the other side of the shield.

And not the least of the services which Sir John Thompson rendered the Dominion was his share in the attempt made in 1892 to obtain a reciprocal trade arrangement with the United States. That last prolonged effort indicated in its results as clearly as language could express, the impossibility of obtaining a treaty such as Canadians could honourably accept. It proved to a demonstration that the American Government would consider no arrangement which did not discriminate against British goods, place a

uniform tariff around the continent, and establish some system of international receipts and excise, controlled by a Joint Commission. This statement, of course, applies only to a Republican policy. The Democratic party will make no reciprocity treaties with any country, believing that they do more harm than good, though no doubt it would negotiate upon the basis of annexation.

On the 31st of March, 1891, and some three weeks after the general elections, Sir Charles Tupper proceeded to Washington in order to confer with the British ambassador, Sir Julian Pauncefote, concerning the proposed reciprocity negotiations. On April 2nd he visited Mr. Blaine, the Secretary of State, and explained the desire of the Canadian Government to obtain some immediate basis for discussion. Mr. Blaine apparently received the proposition with favour, and Sir Charles, returning to Ottawa, obtained the co-operation of Hon. Mr. Foster, Minister of Finance, and Sir John Thompson, Minister of Justice, who were appointed to act with him at the informal interview which had been arranged, and during the further negotiations which were expected.



H.M.S. Blenheim.

CHAPTER XX.

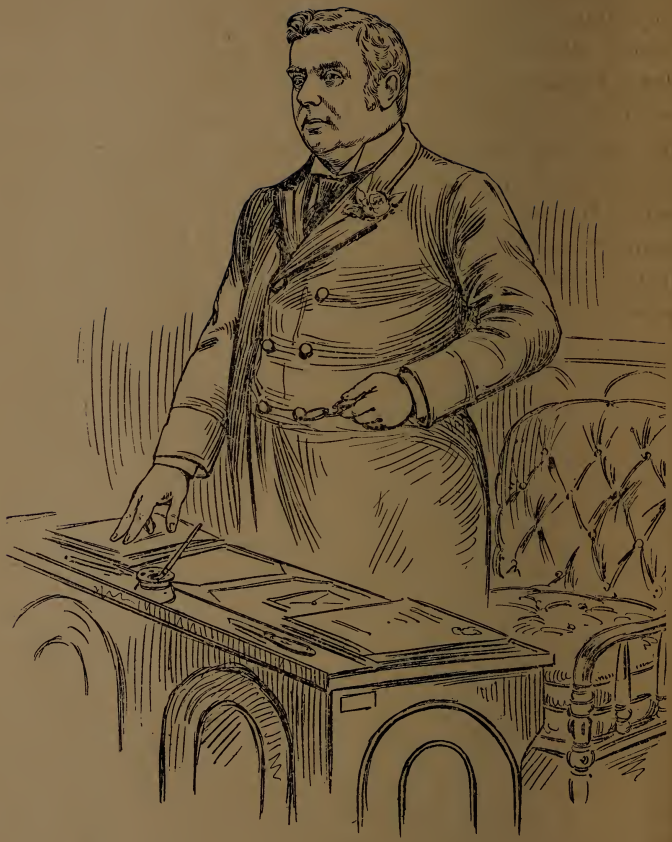
Sir John Thompson and Mr. McCarthy.

During the comparatively brief, but important, period of what may be termed his national career, Sir John Thompson had no mean opponents to encounter and to overcome. Mr. Blake was a foeman worthy of any steel. From a purely intellectual standpoint he was probably the equal of any man in the House of Commons and the superior of most of them. Oratorically, he was not unlike the Minister of Justice in the days when they were pitted against each other. They both had the same faculty for amassing information and conveying it to the listener in logical and well-sustained periods. But Mr. Blake does not appear to have been as ready in his command of language, and the toil which he used to bestow upon the preparation of an important speech and the committing of it to memory, is a familiar matter to those who knew him. As politicians all that can be said in a few words is that one succeeded while the other failed.

Mr. Laurier is a delightful opponent, and no one appreciated his courtesy, tact, and natural graces of manner and oratory more than did Sir John Thompson. In many respects they were as opposite as the poles. The Liberal leader was apparently open in speech and style, excitable at times as is characteristic of his race, impetuous, and somewhat changeable. Sir John was always a reserved man, and this tendency increased rather than diminished with additional responsibilities. He never appeared to be excited, or so rarely as to make it almost remarkable; was never rash or hasty; and when once his mind was made up

it was seldom changed. With Sir Richard Cartwright there was, of course, many a tilt, but on the whole Sir John Thompson appears to have rather admired the uncompromising political hostility of the Kingston knight. He is known to have appreciated the ability displayed in the Budget criticisms, which during so many years, have helped to fill up the Parliamentary bill-of-fare with a never failing raciness of invective and retort. In this respect Sir Richard is probably the most powerful speaker Canada has ever possessed. Without the ruggedness of George Brown he has a sarcastic style which seems to permeate not only his speech but himself, and which certainly makes his invective the bitterest of that of any man in Canadian public life.

The Hon. David Mills was another opponent whose knowledge of constitutional precedents and deep reading in general history made him worthy of every respect and attention. Mr. L. H. Davies, of Prince Edward Island has for a long time been one of the Liberal leaders whose place is secure in the event of party success at the polls, and his characteristic Maritime eloquence had been known to Sir John Thompson since the period of the Halifax Fisheries' Award, when they found themselves for the first time prominently opposed to each other. And so with many more —the eloquent Paterson of Brant; Fraser the forcible free-trader from down by the sea; Lister the fighting Liberal; the fiery Tarte; the irrepressible Devlin. But the one man who stands distinctly out as the head and front of the opposition to Sir John Thompson during recent years is Mr. D'Alton McCarthy. Circumstances seemed to combine in order that the two men should appear in sharp antagonism to one another. Mr. McCarthy during late years refused to join the Liberal Opposition. He refused to support the Conservative party. But his hostility to the Conservative leader, whether personal or political, was voiced in nearly



SIR JOHN THOMPSON,

Speaking in the Canadian House of Commons.

every important issue which has come before the House or the country since 1887.

The unquestioned ability and force which the member for Simcoe displayed in his many speeches, furnishes, of course, all the greater tribute to the success with which Sir John Thompson surmounted the difficulties so greatly augmented by Mr. McCarthy's attitude and advocacy. And in the same way the high rank which so many of the Liberal leaders took in debate, oratory, and upon the stump illustrated the qualities of courage, concentration and conviction which were needed to place a comparatively new man firmly in the saddle of political supremacy and to maintain him in power.

APPENDIX

Some Important Speeches

DELIVERED BY

Sir John Thompson

THE RIEL QUESTION.

Great Speech by the Minister of Justice.

House of Commons, March 22nd, 1886.

Mr. Thompson (Antigonish) on rising to continue the debate, on the motion of Mr. Landry expressing regret that the sentence of the law should have been allowed to take its course in the case of Louis Riel, was received with cheers. He said :—Mr. Speaker, when the member for West Durham, on Friday evening, intimated that the House should hear from the legal adviser of the Government, I felt, although so much has been said already, that the time had come when I should rise, if I intended to rise at all, accept the hon. member's challenge, and make, late though it may appear and tedious though the discussion may have become, such a statement of the facts immediately connected with the part my department has had in connection with the transaction, as it was proper to make before the debate closed. I regret, more because I am a comparative stranger in this House, that my first duty should be to complain of the manner in which this discussion has been carried on, and the way in which it has been brought before the House. It has been said, and the cheer from hon. gentlemen opposite means a reaffirmation of the statement, that the Government has chosen the mode, and the time in which this question should be discussed, and that it has affirmed the indictment. Even if that were true, as it is not—applause—I ask hon. gentlemen opposite who have

given these cheers, how they shall escape the responsibility for the manner in which they have carried on the discussion. (Hear, hear.) It has been contended that Parliament should discuss this matter, as if it sat as a court of appeal.

MR. MILLS—Hear, hear.

MR. THOMPSON—I should like the hon. gentleman to point to a precedent which establishes any such position. We have had not only the contention that Parliament should sit as a court of appeal, but we have had carefully prepared speeches for the defence. I have only to state the case to the House to bring it to the consciousness that a body consisting of two hostile political parties is not a court the temper of which renders it a suitable place to which to appeal criminal cases. (Hear, hear.) We have not only been told that Parliament is a suitable place in which to re-try criminal cases, but that if Parliament does not give the judgment which one side desires, a final appeal upon the case will be made to the people at the polls. But if we have one heated controversy in this House, I should like to ask what we are to have at the polls. Is partisanship, for the first time in the history of the country, to be sunk there? If so, will hon. gentlemen opposite pledge themselves to discuss the matter calmly and deliberately, and to refrain from arousing passions and partisan feelings on other questions? (Hear, hear.) The hon. member for West Durham, in opening his speech on Friday night, condemned anything like temper or feeling in the discussion of a matter of this kind. Yet he had hardly expressed the sentiment when he declared, in a voice that rolled from end to end of this chamber, that he intended to hold the Government responsible for every dollar expended, every life lost, and every pang suffered during the rebellion. I should like the hon. gentleman to state how, after a statement like this,

CONSERVATIVE POLICY.

Speech at Toronto shortly after becoming Prime Minister.

January 13th, 1893.

Sir John Thompson, who was received with tremendous cheering, which lasted for some minutes, said: Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I am most grateful to you for the kind reception which you have just extended to me, and I am grateful to the Young Men's Conservative Association for this great opportunity to address a large body of the people of Toronto. (Cheers.) We heard, sir, that you had a great many young men in the association, and we have brought a number of our young men from Ottawa to greet you and to make your acquaintance. (Cheers.) I agree with what the president said to the public, as well as to the association, on the occasion of his inauguration as president, that it is on associations like this that the future of the party and the future of the country must greatly depend; and I was amused to see in one of the Opposition papers shortly afterwards the statement that it was high time that I appointed a Minister on purpose to look after this association. (Laughter.) Ladies and gentlemen, I recognize the importance as not at all over valued by that estimate. An association comprising nearly five thousand young men of Toronto is worthy of a Minister of its own, and until they get a better one I want to be understood as being a candidate for the place. (Loud cheers.) I need not

tell you, but I have often told the people of my own province with pride, that the people of Toronto, awake, alive and active as they are on the public questions of the day, give the pulse beat to the public throughout this great country whenever the electoral struggles come on. (Cheers.) And, sir, I cannot help stating at this early part of my address the proposition which has lately been made, and which it is my privilege to give voice to to-night, that the associations of the city of Toronto—the Conservative Associations, including this great association, should build for themselves a permanent home in this city, in which all could be combined and all could be accommodated; and that there could be no greater, no more fitting tribute to the memory of the great statesman, who, for nearly half a century, was at the head of this great party, than that it should take the name and the place of the Macdonald memorial in the city. (Loud cheers.) I hope that the idea that is thus brought forward with a view of giving not merely accommodation, but a home to these organizations, will be carried forward to success, and that Toronto will have the pride of having in that way a very substantial monument to our departed chieftain. (Cheers.) I think there is good reason for this. There is good reason for the association of Toronto to have a home. You have lately been addressed by the eloquent leader of the Opposition, and the people of Hamilton have heard him in glowing terms describe the hope, the still lingering and flickering hope, of the Liberal party in this country—(Hear, hear)—and he has based it on a great historical parallel—the parallel, namely, that once the Whigs in England were fifty years out of office. (Laughter.) The recollections of the fifty years' sojourn in the wilderness of the Whigs under Charles James Fox and other great Whig statesmen give heart and hope to the Liberals of Canada to-day. (Laughter.

A PARTIAL LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

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His Excellency the Earl of Aberdeen.
Sir Charles Tupper, Bart.
Rt. Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald.
Hon. Alex. Mackenzie, M.P.
Sir John Caldwell Abbott.
Sir Mackenzie Bowell.
Hon. Wilfred Laurier, M.P.
Sir Frank Smith.
The Earl of Derby.
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Sir Oliver Mowat.
Sir A. P. Caron, M.P.
D'Alton McCarthy, Q.C., M.P.
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